DRAGONSTAR

SMUGGLER'S RUN

d20 system

DRAGONSTAR™

Smuggler's Run

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Introduction

Fantasy Flight Games is pleased to present *Smuggler's Run*, the guide to smugglers and free traders for **Dragonstar**, the space fantasy campaign setting designed for use with the d20 System. *Smuggler's Run* presents new feats, prestige classes, spells, equipment, starships, and rules systems that build on the mechanics in the *Starfarer's Handbook* and *Guide to the Galaxy*.

Inside this book you'll find the rules you need to play a single smuggler character or a whole adventuring party of intergalactic traders and travelers. New prestige classes such as the league runner and the corsair give your character abilities more deeply rooted in the role of a free-wheeling star captain. New feats such as Exciting Tales and Deeply Intimidating give any character the traits of a smooth or rugged scoundrel. Spells like *veneer* and *secret tongue* bring wizards and sorcerers into the fold.

How can you make your fortune without cargo to haul? *Smuggler's Run* gives you simple but flexible rules for supply and demand. Use these to randomly generate whole new markets or to further detail existing worlds in your **Dragonstar** campaign. You'll also need a ship to move your cargo, so *Smuggler's Run* gives you new models of starships and ready-to-use, customized vessels with complete deckplans.

Your fortune's out there. Find it.

How To Use This Book

Smuggler's Run is intended for players and DMs alike. The basic rules for cargo and commerce should be understood by everyone at the game table. This book's advice on designing and participating in a trader's campaign should be read by DMs, of course, but players should read that section, too. The starships, robots, feats, and prestige classes presented herein are just as valuable to player characters as they are to the untrustworthy scum they'll be forced to do business with.

As a working example of the ideas this book explores, a new corner of the **Dragonstar** galaxy is described in the last chapter. This is the Smuggler's Run, where crews of independent traders, businessmen, scoundrels, and pirates have a precious short while to make their fortunes before the Empire moves in and takes all the money away. The data offered up on the Run isn't secret knowledge; it's the sort of information that any well-informed galactic traveler should have upon entering the area. Some of it is common knowledge, some of it is rumor, some of it is informed speculation, and a little bit is just plain false. What's what is up to the DM of your campaign to decide, and for you to find out during your travels.

A lot of the material you'll find in this book is of use in any **Dragonstar** campaign. Like any expansion, you shouldn't feel pressured to use all of the new rules in this book in your campaign. It's possible to play out a whole smuggler's campaign without ever really worrying about cargo, just as it's possible to cut out, replace, or add any planet you like to the Smuggler's Run. Assemble the crew, the cargo, and the campaign you want. The pieces you need are in here.

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Not everything in this book is open, however. All game mechanics and rules-related material, and all game statistics derived from the d20 System SRD, are designated as open game content. Background and setting information are designated as closed content.

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Adventure Ads

Throughout this book, you'll find adventure hooks, character seeds, and other campaign nuggets in boxes like this one. These are a way for you to keep the campaign moving, despite the enormous scale of the **Dragonstar** universe. These ads circulate across the galaxy via the InfoNet. Anyone can see them. Players can use them to pursue adventure leads and find cohorts. DMs can use them to inspire new adventures and NPCs and introduce interesting cargo at a moment's notice.

CHAPTER ONE

BUSINESS

Introduction

This chapter presents simple rules for commerce that emphasize player choices and character skill over complex market factors and elaborate business laws. This chapter's game mechanics and those rules derived from the d20 System Reference Document are designated as **Open Game Content**. Everything else is closed content.

How to Use These Rules

Doing business isn't usually very exciting, but it can be the reason why exciting things happen. This is the most important rule in this book: Use these rules only to promote, provoke, or enhance your adventures. These rules aren't intended to offer a detailed simulation of an interstellar fantasy empire's economic systems. If the concepts of supply and demand are getting in the way of your adventures, you should stop sweating the details and get to the interesting villains and fantastic ports of call. Economic systems get thrown out of whack all the time because the people that operate within those systems make biased, foolish, optimistic, or greedy decisions. Those decisions are always more exciting than the price of textiles on Persilom.

Breadth Vs. Depth

The scale of the **Dragonstar** setting can be overwhelming. In order for the player characters to find buyers for their hold full of cargo, you might feel required to create a port for every possible cargo in the galaxy, but it's not necessary. You can randomly generate the planets the characters visit using the tables in the *Guide to the Galaxy*. Add this book's import and export characteristics to the mix, and you have even more flexibility when designing new worlds on the fly.

When planning a campaign focused on free traders and smugglers, you have two general approaches to consider. A broader campaign style lets the characters take their ship wherever they like and seek out fortune wherever it might be. They'll visit more ports, but only get a brief taste of each one. You'll have to create adventures for them to get swept up in, no matter where in the universe they happen to *teleport* this week.

A deeper campaign style focuses on a smaller corner of the universe with a finite number of ports between which the characters travel regularly. They see less of the galaxy, but more of the local ports. You'll have to create a lot of material at the beginning of the campaign or use what's been started for you in Chapter Five. As the characters develop ties and relationships in the region, adventures will naturally develop.

A combination of both methods is probably best. Finding the right mix is up to the individual DM. Remember, it's more important to entertain everyone at the table than to accurately reflect the nuances of the shipping business.

The Job

The commercial foundation of the Dragon Empire is the concept of supply and demand (see the *Guide to the Galaxy*, page 28–31). Goods have to get from where they're made to where they're needed, and that's the job of the interstellar trader.

Shipping

A shipping business moves other people's cargo from one point in the galaxy to another. Customers with valuable cargo hire shipping firms to carry their goods to market in a timely fashion. What happens to the cargo when it arrives isn't the concern of the shipping business, so long as it gets where it's needed.

Shipping businesses are ideal for a simple campaign. The characters don't worry about finding cargo or locating buyers, they only worry about traveling as fast as possible from one place to another without getting into trouble. Characters crewing a shipping vessel probably don't even own their ship, but instead operate it for the shipping firm. The crew has a liason at the firm—their shipping agent—who finds them cargo runs to make, deals with customers, and arranges for cargo to be delivered to the ship. With the shipping agent as an NPC, this business essentially supplies the PCs with a destination and an adventure every week.

Shipping rates are determined by dividing the costs of the cargo run (fuel, ship maintenance, *teleport* costs, feeding the crew, etc.) by the number of pounds the ship is transporting. This is the run's break-even point. How much more than this the crew or the firm charges is up to them, but the going rate in the Empire is 10% above cost, and most customers expect to pay just that. Ships with larger cargo capacities can underbid smaller ships for customer contracts. Merchant emporiums with fleets of enormous ships can run small-time outfits right out of business. Size can be compensated for, however, with skill. The better the pilot, the fewer *teleports* he needs on a single shipping run and the less money he therefore spends.

Shippers are responsible for the safe delivery of their cargo. If the cargo is lost to pirates or accidents en route to the destination, the shipping company may be required to pay to replace the cargo.

Trading

Free traders choose what cargo to buy and where to sell it, and risk their own money every time they do it. The skills necessary to keep a free trading business operating are so varied that independent outfits often assemble odd crews of uniquely talented individuals to create a single ship that's up to the difficult task of making a profit.

Traders make their money by negotiating the best prices for their cargo and selling them at the right ports, where they are in demand. This isn't always easy, though, as a free trader usually has little else to fall back on if they can't find a buyer for their cargo. A hull full of entertainment holograms can't recharge a *starcaster*, after all.

Free traders rarely own their ships. A crew might operate a ship owned by some terrestrial merchant who leases it to the crew in exchange for a share in profits. Some absentee owners—if they're very wealthy—own a starship just to tap into the mystique of the interstellar free trader's lifestyle. Others want to have a vessel at their disposal only a few days out of the year and lease it out in exchange for routine maintenance during the rest of the year. The most common way to acquire a starship, though, is to buy it with money loaned by a wealthy investor who makes her money back by charging interest (between 3% and 8%, usually).

SMUGGLING

Smuggling is one important step away from simple free trading. A smuggler buys and sells cargo regardless of its legal status, and very often specifically because of its legal status. Some free traders make smuggling runs only when they have no other choice or the risk is very low. Others buy and trade nothing but illegal cargo. In the eyes of the Empire, there is no difference between the two. A single count of smuggling makes you a smuggler.

Getting illegal cargo into and out of ports requires an even larger array of skills than simple free trading. Smuggling crews make use of bribes, illegal technology, magic, and sometimes firepower to get into and out of those ports where their fortunes are waiting for them.

While the pay-outs on smuggling operations are usually substantial, so are the risks. Imperial law enforcement operatives very often shoot smugglers down rather than bringing them into custody at all. Pirates prey on smugglers without fear because smuggler's can't report their contraband cargo stolen. Still, there are enough tales of smugglers turned into rich princes on successful runs that the temptation is just too much for many free trader crews to resist.

Ports and Markets

Ports and markets are two more ways to define the worlds you build for your **Dragonstar** adventures (see World-Building on page 126 of the *Guide to the Galaxy*). These describe some of a world's social and economic conditions, which are essential in a smuggler's campaign. Although these characteristics focus on commercial matters, they can be used to suggest other cultural and political characteristics, too.

To see examples of these ideas put to use, see the worlds of the Smuggler's Run in Chapter 5.

Ports

Planets without starports aren't of much interest to an interstellar freighter captain. Ports allow freighter crews to interact with a planet's market easily. Buyers and sellers of all sorts meet and negotiate in port-side pubs, clubs, and dives. Ports are also where local authorities inspect incoming and outgoing cargo and collect their tariffs. A planet may have many different ports, but the tendency towards global unity in the Empire makes most ports on a single planet seem very similar to one another.

PORT CHARACTERISTICS

These simple characteristics are used to describe a port, including the landing pads, warehouses, control towers, customs offices, and so forth. The area defined by these characteristics might be as small as a landing strip and a radio shack or as large as a planetary defense perimeter with dozens of orbital inspection facilities. Altering the characteristics of a port is a little like altering the EL of an encounter; it will impact how easy it is for the players to succeed in their quests.

Alignment: Like towns, ports have an alignment that describes the beliefs and mandated practices of the powers that be and, maybe, the individuals working at ground level. A port's alignment is sometimes the same as the world it serves, but not always. Planets with contraband in high demand frequently have an alignment different from that of their port authority. This happens on Imperial-occupied worlds with great frequency.

Skill Level: The qualifications of the port's inspectors and general operators are represented similar to a ship's crew, with a single modifier that is used for any necessary skill checks, such as Search or Sense Motive.

Integrity: This describes the general susceptibility of a port's staff to corruption, such as bribes, threats, and deals. This is a DC against which skill checks like Diplomacy and Intimidate are made. Multiply the DC by 10 to determine the cost of successful bribes. Note that the staff may be caught taking bribes, depending on the port's skill level.

Security: This is the average CR of the local police or security presence, usually indicating the number of warrior NPC class levels they possess.

Taxes: Due to the Empire's methods of government, taxes are usually independent of local market factors. Even if a planet is starving and needs food, Mezzenbone and the local prefect get their share. Taxes are paid on

income only, so free traders pay when selling cargo rather than when buying it. Taxes are typically 3% to 8% in civilized ports.

Markets

A planet's market is what attracts traders to it. Whatever goods a world imports and exports make up its market.

MARKET CHARACTERISTICS

Markets are characterized by groups of goods, of which there are several types. Each type of good encompasses many individual products. Raw materials are so abundant throughout the universe that natural resources are almost never traded over interstellar distances. The real valuables in the Empire are those distinctive or useful products that are only made in a few places throughout the galaxy.

Exports: These are the types of goods that the world produces or otherwise has in abundance.

Imports: These are the trade goods that a planet lacks or otherwise seeks to attain.

Volume: This is a general indicator of a planet's consumer base and economic power. This is the maximum amount, in tons, that a planet's people can buy or sell on any one visit. Most free traders run businesses far too small to overwhelm a port's supplies of goods or money, but it's a big universe and exceptions abound.

TYPES OF TRADE GOODS

Crafts: All manner of common furniture, pots, pans, and other objects of daily life.

Electronics: Communicators, datapads, scanners, and other sorts of electronic devices.

Entertainment: Recorded plays, holograms, music, books, and other recreational media.

Foodstuffs: All consumable goods that are not luxury items, including water and raw grains.

Heavy Equipment: Finished vehicles, printing presses, factory equipment, and other large machines.

Information: Everything from software and robot programs to raw data.

Luxury Goods: Exotic foods, furs, jewelry, and similar items.

Supplies: A broad category encompassing tools and parts needed for particular sectors of business, such as lumber, chemicals, paper, and so forth. Subtypes include: commercial, industrial, magical, medical, military, religious.

Textiles: Sewn, stitched, and worn objects, especially clothing and space suits.

Unique: Rare or unique objects, such as art objects or specific types of crafts. Fads, especially, fall under this category.

MAKING SENSE OF THE MARKET

The trick to making these characteristics come to life is to fill in the spaces between the lines, if you will, with invented details. The planet Monscrome in the Smuggler's Run, for example, has a surplus of machine parts and a market hungry for imported entertainment because it's a crossroads junkyard with little indigenous cultural scene Use your imagination and don't back away from the ideas you get from odd groupings of characteristics. Those strange cultures and situations are the ones players will remember.

Buying and Selling

These rules deal with trade goods types in the abstract. You should feel free to add more details to the cargoes characters purchase. Be as precise as you like when discussing individual sales opportunties. Don't sell the characters a cargo of foodstuffs when you can sell them 50 tons of Chadran elvenfish.

Pricing Goods

With a galaxy full of goods to choose from, there is no way to price trade goods by their type. Instead, trade goods are priced by the pound, with the cost per pound used as a measure of the good's quality or rarity. Profit and loss is therefore calculated as a percentage of an object's average value on the galactic market.

You can use specific items from the equipment list in the *Starfarer's Handbook* or *Imperial Supply* as the basis for cargo by the ton. Simply determine an item's cost per pound based on its price and weight on the equipment list. Objects that weigh less than a pound are treated as weighing one-half pound for purposes of freight. Once you've determined the cost per pound, you can purchase as many tons as you like for your next cargo run. Remember, there are 2,000 pounds to a ton.

For example: a courtier's outfit costs 30 cr and weighs 6 pounds; that's (30 divided by 6) 5 cr per pound and, clearly, a textile. One ton of fashionable new clothes has an average value of 10,000 cr, then.

Buying Goods

Goods cost less when purchased from a port where they're abundant and therefore listed as an export. If a good is listed once, it's available for 75% of the average

RANDOM MARKETS

To create random markets for new ports or planets in your game, follow these steps. First, roll 1d3 each for exports and imports; this is the number of individual trade goods being exported or imported from the planet. Next, roll 1d20 to identify what sorts of trade goods those exports and importa are. If a good comes up on the 1d20 roll twice, mark it "double;" if three times, mark it "triple." Roll to identify supplies subtypes, if necessary. Then roll 1d6x1000 per population category of the planet on page 134 of the *Guide to the Galaxy*; that's the number of tons the market will buy or sell on that visit.

1d20	Trade Good	1d20	Trade Good
1–2	Foodstuffs	11–12	Electronics
3–4	Crafts	13–14	Entertainment
5–6	Information	15–16	Luxury Goods
7–8	Heavy Equipment	17–18	Textiles
9–10	Supplies	19–20	Unique

1d6	Supplies Subtypes	Example
1	Commercial	Office supplies, batteries
2	Industrial	Machine parts, training manuals
3	Medical	Chemicals, bandages, instruments
4	Magical	Spell components, blank media
5	Religious	Hymn books, holy water
6	Military	Weapons, armor

price. If a good is listed as "double," then it is available for 50% of the average price. Goods not listed on the export or import list are available at average price.

Selling Goods

Likewise, goods are worth more where they are in demand. Selling a good at a port where it's listed as an import fetches 150% of the average price. If it's listed as "double" or "triple" then it fetches 200% or 300% of the average price, respectively.

CONTRABAND

Illegal goods—such as military supplies are in the Empire—cost twice what they otherwise should after all price adjustments based on supply and demand. Therefore, if weapons are illegal and in demand on Persilom, then they're worth 300% of the average price.

Finding a Buyer

Locating a buyer for your cargo requires a bit of legwork. If you already have a port in mind where you know your cargo is in demand, then you can make a Gather Information or Research check to locate customers willing to purchase all or some of your cargo, up to the volume rating of the planet in question. You gain a +2 insight bonus to this check if you have 5 or more ranks in Profession (trader).

DC	Condition
15	Good is not in demand
10	Good is in demand
+5	Inquiring discreetly
+5	Good is illegal
+5	Cargo is new to the area
–5	Shipment was expected

If you have not already located a planet where your particular cargo is in demand, or you cannot find a suitable buyer there, you can scan the InfoNet for buyers on nearby worlds. For each span of light years out from your current position, you can make one Research

check. If you succeed, you've located a port with a demand for your cargo. Roll a random market using the table at left, but assign your cargo's type as one of the planet's imports automatically.

Light Years	Research DC
Same System	30
1–10	25
11–50	20
51–100	15
100+	10

Price Negotiations

Whether buying or selling, the skilled trader can squeeze a little more money out of anyone. With a successful Diplomacy check, sellers can be persuaded to cut a deal and buyers can be persuaded to spend more money. The DC of this check depends on the NPC's attitude toward the diplomatic character (see Influencing NPC Attitudes, PHB v.3.5). If the NPC's attitude is changed to friendly or better, the price changes 10% in favor of the PC.

Trades

Of course, in some ports, trade goods change hands directly. Generally speaking, so long as both parties agree to it, trade goods can be used the same as cash when trading for other goods. Some crews do this routinely, passing off cargo to a ship that's headed towards more suitable parts in exchange for cargo that's more valuable locally.

Competitors

For the most part, competitors exist as NPCs under the control of the DM. They turn up when stories or adventures call for them. To create the impression that there are other free traders doing business all around the PCs, you can use these simple options to make things that much more difficult for them.

When the PCs are engaging in trade negotiations with a customer, you can fabricate an opposed Diplomacy check from a competitor behind the scenes by rolling 1d20 for the skill roll and 1d10 to determine a random modifier to the roll.

When characters are competing for shipping or passenger contracts, you can require them to put in a bid to the customer, expressed as a percentage the characters plan to charge over the actual cost of the shipping run. That is, this is the profit they intend to make off the job. Off-stage competitors submit bids of 2d6%, with high bids representing small-time, inexperienced outfits and low bids representing the insanely massive shipping conglomerates. If the PCs' bid is lower, the customer hires them for the job. If not, they lose the contract.

Passengers

Freighters don't routinely take on passengers unless both the freighter and the traveler happen to be going to the same place anyway. In that case, the money made off of a passenger is almost entirely profit. The standard rate for a passenger or crew bunk aboard a freighter is 100 credits per day, though characters are welcome to charge whatever they like.

At any modernized port, a freighter can purchase an ad on the local network announceing open passenger space. Ads cost 10–100 credits depending on the port. The ad brings would-be passengers by to see the ship, which allows crewmembers to make Bluff, Diplomacy, or other skill checks to persuade passengers to hop aboard. The check has a base DC of 15, though better rolls may attract more passengers. It's never a sure thing, though. Passengers and ports are hard to predict.

DC	Passengers
15	1d6
20	1d8
25	1d12
30	1d20

DC	Condition
–2	10% reduction in rates
–4	20% reduction in rates
–6	30% reduction in rates

Adventures in Cargo

Every time the PCs interact with cargo it's a chance for an adventure, if you plan it right. Whenever the crew has to choose which of two goods to buy on a planet sur-

face, they're also deciding what planet (or what sort of planet) they'll be *teleporting* to next. If the characters crew a very large cargo ship, entire adventures might play out on board involving infested cargo or the pirates who have come looking for a supply of liquid mithral.

Think of each cargo purchase as a branch in the characters' story. Will they purchase the foodstuffs that are needed to feed starving miners in the Tarnahan system, or will they buy 100 tons of strange artifacts from Chadra in hopes that they can find a buyer? Will they agree to carry a secret, volatile cargo or will they turn down the small fortune they've been offered?

Hand-crafted cargo runs are always more interesting than those between random ports because something is bound to happen along the journey if it's a story worth telling. Your imagination can create all manner of strange packages for the PCs to shuttle and—just as important—weird characters to hire them.

Cargo Runs

Smuggler adventures are often thought of as races to the finish line or harried escapes from black-gloved ISPD agents. While those are fine encounters to play out, a whole campaign spent outrunning Imperial ships can get very boring quickly. Smugglers must rely on their cunning, their subtlety, and their ability to persuade as often as they must draw their blasters.

Wanted to Ship

200 tons of medical supplies from Monscrome to Drakescrest Hospital on Persilom, will pay rates up to 125% of cost. Urgent! Supplies expire in 40 hours. Must be kept stable or will be ruined. Contact Valcosser on Monscrome, InfoNet address 17891.366.MNCM.11, right away.

A multi-talented crew of spacers can get involved in every sort of adventure the **Dragonstar** universe offers. The reasons why they do are just a little bit different. The crew might board a derelict space station in search of salvage to sell on the open market. Exploratory missions to backwater worlds can lead to adventures in cultural misunderstandings. The machine of war consumes a lot of fuel and somebody has to be hired to deliver it.

Onboard Adventures

Large cargo ships carry large cargo containers, some of which are large enough to be miniature dungeons. If the characters find that a monster has somehow stowed away aboard their ship, they're going to go looking for it. That means moving through the zero-g cargo pod full of floating ore, searching the module full of jungle plants, and scanning the pod full of heavy construction equipment.

Every week the crew welcomes another potential adventure aboard their ship, be it the "haunted" passenger module, the warded pod with an arcane book inside, or the shipment of live constrictor snakes. Setting adventures aboard the characters' property gives them a real incentive to face the adventure and makes the ship feel like more than a piece of equipment. The vessel starts to feel like a place as soon as the characters get to explore it.

Consider, too, that the cargo the characters haul is essentially the treasure they'll earn for successfully completing the adventure. If pirates board the PCs' ship in search of loot, the players could feel the results of that attack for weeks as they work to repair the ship, recoup the loss of the stolen cargo, and find the pirates who attacked them. Everything becomes more personal, which draws the characters deeper into the game world and the campaign.

CHAPTER TWO

CHARACTERS

Introduction

This chapter covers all manner of character-related game material, from multiclassing options to prestige classes, from new uses for your skills to new feats that compliment them. You'll also find an assortment of new spells useful to the free trader character at the end of this chapter.

Crews of Characters

The dynamic, cooperative party mentality that makes so many terrestrial adventuring groups successful can be put to good use aboard a starship. A starship crew is a natural adventuring party, but the roles the character classes may be asked to fill are somewhat different. So much depends on the interpersonal skills, business acumen, discretion, and caution of a freighter crew. A quick gun and a strong arm have their place, to be sure, but that place isn't typically at the front of the ship.

This section explores some roles that every character class can fill on a free-trading starship. Game mechanics, class names, and any material derived from the d20 System Reference Document are hereby declared as **Open Game Content**, with the exception of any words, names, or phrases otherwise claimed as Product Identity.

Barbarian

In some ways, the barbarian is the most out-of-place aboard a starship, much less a ship intended for savvy dealings in the modern business world. Yet it's not uncommon to find barbarians serving aboard privately operated freighters. Having a barbarian in the crew tells customers that the ship has been to exotic ports and knows how to deal with even the strangest cultures. Likewise, having an obvious bruiser aboard sends a clear signal to the thieves and ruffians watching in every seedy port: This ship is defended. So, a barbarian can serve a symbolic role in the crew.

In practice, a barbarian's abilities don't see much use, though. It's common for a freighter captain to keep an obvious fighter aboard for show, but few captains want to risk the consequences of a real fight. Barbarians, then, have to find some other way to make themselves useful. Often, this is just as unskilled labor, hoisting crates and dragging luggage.

Barbarians sometimes serve aboard freighters as a means of getting acclimated to the galaxy. By traveling the stars, a barbarian gets introduced to the ways of the larger world, meets new people, learns to read and write, and slowly saves up enough money to go off and make her own way in the universe. At least, that's the plan. Escaping the gravity of the freighter business is hard; countless little cargo haulers have a barbarous mascot from some frontier world on their crew.

Remember that most freighters almost never cross the Dragon Empire on routine business. Most freight routes put crews back on the same world time and again. A barbarian from a nearby primitive planet could serve as a ship's ambassador, of all things, between her world's low-tech suppliers and the galaxy's high-tech consumers.

Bard

A natural fit for almost any intergalactic business, bards find it easy to land jobs on freighter crews. The

difficulty is in finding just the right place where a bard fits in. Most shipping agents want their ships to be represented by a single voice, and so won't hire multiple face men for one ship.

A bard's performance skills can be put to use advertising a ship's availability in an area marketplace, or impressing customers on business dinners to taverns and clubs. It's no secret that small-time outfits owe a lot of their business to the mystique of the free trader's lifestyle. It's the bard's job to make potential customers believe they're tasting that lifestyle by hiring the bard's ship for their next job.

Of course, bards also make fine negotiators themselves. A bard has the social skills for the task, but also an array of spells and special abilities to use. Magicallly influencing customers is at the very least unethical, but in most ports it's also illegal. Many freighter crews get away with it anyway.

Almost every class can gain some advantage through multiclassing with the bard. There is no other profession in the galaxy in which the jack-of-all-trades is more essential. Alone in the deep empty with nothing but skill and luck between fortune and ruin, there's no telling what talents might be called on. But the bard is also master of no trade, which can be dangerous.

Cleric

Starships need clerics just like adventuring parties do. A cleric serves as the ship's doctor, counselor, and spiritual advisor. A cleric's spells are essential to the prolonged operation of some ships. It's sometimes more useful to keep a cleric in the crew than it is to fix the oven. These are classic, thankless roles of servitude that so many clerics get dropped into.

Those clerics who happily settle on free trader ships are not of the classical variety, usually. There is a whole fleet of religious artifact traders based out of Persilom (in the Smuggler's Run), in fact, in which some clerical training is required of employees who want a full share in the business. Missionaries sometimes travel for years with a freighter crew, paying their way with divine spells and prayer. Clerics also make fine ambassadors when first visiting a world new to the crew.

For Hire

University-trained botanist and naturalist seeks immediate passage off Praxilus. Has completed three contracted tours as greenery cargo manager aboard Gevise family ship *Gracious*. Will work for passenger accomodations. Can cook, clean, sew, plant, and husband plants or animals Travels with pets, non-negotiable.

Seeking to Hire

Farming family on Serenity seeks cargo vessel to retrieve funerary vessel on Harbor and deliver to the village of Corthington, Serenity. Remains are held at Vixmark Hospice under the name "Harrilond." Deceased spirit is linked to vessel, please do not lose. Will not pay for vessel without attached spirit. 52,000 credits paid upon delivery to Harrilond Manor.

The Unification Church doesn't bear any automatic grudge against clerics who serve with pedestrian outfits. The open-minded morality of the church even allows good, lawful holy folk to serve with crews of questionable legal standing, so long as they are moral. Sometimes, this is so the cleric can learn something about perspective in the universe. Sometimes, this is so the cleric can slowly teach the wicked how to be righteous.

Druid

Druids are infrequently employed on free trader ships, and those captains who do employ them think of them as a sort of trade secret. Druids make great cargo specialists. Not only is trade in live animals a multi-million credit business, but most free traders aren't equipped to do it. A druid in the crew makes it much easier for a small-scale operation to find, appraise, transport, and sell living animals and plants.

Despite what groups such as the Green Cabal (*Player's Companion*, page 24) report, it is quite possible to safely and humanely transport animals from one planet to another. In some cases, such as with rare or highly adapted species of cattle, this is essential to colonizing efforts and no more hazardous to the animals than life on their own world. Some creatures are even transported to safety, lifted off of dying planets or out of industrialized atmospheres that have turned to poison.

Of course, Imperial law forbids many other forms of animal transport. Alien creatures can devastate the ecology of an unprepared planet. Yet another reason why, sometimes, the illegal transport of organic species is so profitable.

Druids of questionable morals may fall into business with poachers, who hunt, collect, or kill animals for

Looking to Hire

Grounded ship at Montscroll seeks experienced mechanic for five days repair work. Parts and tools supplied. Vessel is a Krellix hauler with severe damage to hull foil. Private mechanists only, no corporate or government employees need apply. Pays 175 credits per day, plus meals. Urgent.

their valuable parts. On some worlds, whole animals are luxury items, put to use as pets or cataloged in a royal menagerie. These druids are not the sort that most folk think of when they imagine druids, but they do exist and they sometimes earn colossal fortunes.

A loophole in the language of Imperial law (which has been magnified in Mezzenbone's time) regards the right to capture and sell creatures from unexplored worlds. If the Royal Exploratory Service has not yet set foot on a planet, that planet's indigenous species are not yet subject to Imperial law. In some cases, these species are identical to those of other worlds, in which case they already fall under the domain of the law, but new species can be sold, even offworld, legally. Ships with druids race to beat the RES to these planets in hopes of pulling in a fortune off of rich armchair biologists and exploration buffs in the core worlds.

In a more mundane capacity, many druids serve aboard starships as cooks or medics. It's not glamorous, but is essential to ship operations. At least such a druid gets to see the universe.

Fighter

More ships hire trained fighters than really need to. The perception that space is filled to the brim with pirates gets a lot of captains to pay ridiculous wages to undertrained and inexperienced mercenaries. Most ships require either a single, smart tactician or just a few bruisers to show off for the sake of the customer's peace of mind.

An old saying among freighter captains goes like this: "Bring a soldier on board if you want to start a war." In truth, pirate attacks rarely turn into real battles. Most freighter captains cooperate, lose their cargo, report it to the client, and chalk it up as the cost of doing business. Hiring a bunch of trigger-happy gunmen just increases the chances that piracy turns into bloodshed.

That's all fine and good in the Empire, but in the Outlands, survival isn't just a matter of financial margins. Freighter crews need fighters to scare off thieves and outmaneuver pirates before an attack even takes place. Smugglers and other illegal operators are even more likely to need fighters, because they can't just report their cargo stolen. More than that, frontier law squads have a reputation for boarding ships more violently than some pirates if they suspect they've caught a fugitive smuggler.

Rather than keep mercenaries aboard ship, though, most crews choose to hire ex-fighters or other workers with combat experience. Outright fighters might get bored on some journeys, but crews without a little combat skill might get killed. Multiclassed fighters are a good middle-of-the-road solution.

Mechanist

An unsettling number of private starships routinely operate without a trained mechanist on board. Travel by *starcaster* leads some crews to believe that they're never far from the next planet or machine shop. Even making the shortest, simplest *teleports* can result in trouble, though. It's best to have someone aboard who can get the ship running again in an emergency.

Freighter jobs can sometimes seem boring to a mechanist. The equipment isn't especially exciting or advanced, most of the time. The problems that arise are routine and repetitive. It's not glamorous work.

Fortunately, that's not always what a mechanist is after. Some mechanists just love technology and are happy to have jobs that let them tinker. Others like the idea of being attached to a single ship for a good length of time; it becomes something they can call their own, even when it's not actually theirs.

Mechanists sometimes have nothing to do with the business of the ship, and are just concerned with the ship itself. Vessels leased from shipping agents may even come with a contracted mechanist who cannot be fired by the crew. Mechanists might also learn their craft just to land an interstellar career and see the universe. There are as many reasons for a mechanist to serve aboard a free-trading starship as there are ships to carry them.

Seeking To Charter

Monastic students seek to hire private transport to a position 100 LY Rimward of Baranda. Ship must be available for 14–21 days. 11 students outgoing, 3 returning. Accomodations negotiable. Will pay *starcaster* fees in liquid mithral, plus passenger rates. 4,000 pounds of cargo expected on return trip. Will pay standard freight costs.

Monk

More than any other class, monks are hard to find on starfreighters. Some find work in the same capacity as a fighter or a barbarian, but even this is rare. Monks just don't have many reasons to participate in the shipping business.

The tennets of their order sometimes land monks on starships. Some orders encourage members to travel the galaxy for a period of years, in search of cosmic insight. Some monks work simple jobs as exercises in discipline and humility.

In practice, the most common connections betwen a monk and a merchant crew are personal. Monks forge strong interpersonal connections with people, and these are what binds a monk to the ship: the unique individuals aboard. Unlike the other classes, it's almost never about business to the monk.

Paladin

Genuine, dedicated paladins are rare aboard dirty, common spacecraft. Ex-paladins are more common. A bleak past and shaken faith lead many souls into the restless life of the space traveler, and jobs aboard the big commercial freighters are easy to get. For these sorts of folk, the job is a chance to escape something and disappear into the masses.

For a time, though, during the Copper Age, paladins were assigned to travel the stars aboard civilian starships as a means of keeping the peace, encouraging responsible behavior, and upholding righteousness. This was not a popular practice among civilian and commercial captains. The paladins paid their way aboard ships as passengers and then began to comment and scrutinize all manner of behavior. These strict and holy passengers had no legal authority, but they had a certain religious authority. The idea was that crews could operate normally without fear of legal action, but be set on a more proper course of ethics and morality.

This experiment did not end well. The wanderlust of space got into some of the volunteer paladins, turning them into wayfarers and starhands. Other paladins found themselves stranded on remote worlds, unable to find a ship that would welcome them aboard.

Like monks, paladins usually have personal reasons for participating in a mundane business venture. Those reasons might be rooted in faith, love, loyalty or something more formal, such as an unfortunate contract which cannot be lawfully broken. Some paladins make their reasons public, others keep them to themselves.

Attention Rangers!

Hagrid Shipping is looking for navigators and frontiersmen to join the *Adamantine Dream* on a mineral-hunting expedition into the Rimward Barrens. Contracts handled through the RES. Must have five years experience with space travel and *starcaster* navigation. Surface navigation skills a plus. Six-month contracts pay 500 credits per week, 30,000 credits upon maturity. No families, no pets. Expedition will be communications-free.

Pilot

No class more common in the business of interstellar trade. Although some ships actually have no proper pilots onboard—relying instead on robots or passably trained mechanists—every ship needs someone to fly it. True, dedicated pilots often make poor businessmen, though. They choose runs based on a fondness for the system's sky or attempt foolhardy *teleports* just to keep themselves interested. It's surprisingly common, for this reason, to find starship captains who are not pilots themselves.

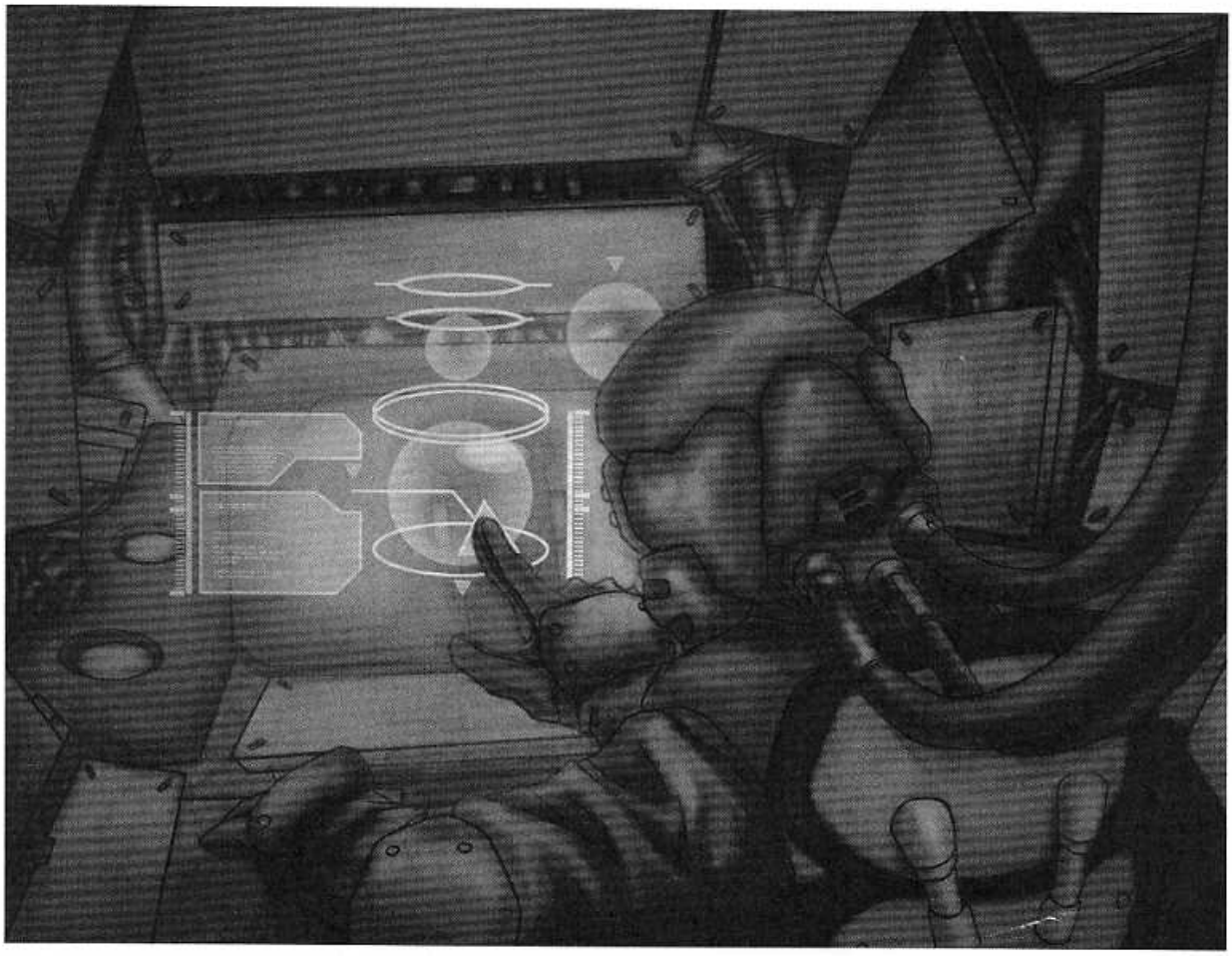
Multiclass pilots are even more common than pilots. Freighter steering isn't especially thrilling for most flyers, and freighter courses are often concerned with safety over speed. Professional, commercial pilots pick up levels in other classes when they transition into the world of business, while merchants and traders learn a little bit about spaceships when they strike out into the offworld market.

There is no standard crew break-down for a freighter, but every vessel has a pilot's station. On under-manned ships—most ships are under-manned—the pilot fills all of the technical roles related to the vessel. Some commercial freighter agencies even send their ships out with just a single pilot and a robot crew. The pilot, then, is also the navigator, the cargo steward, and the engineer.

Ranger

Space is the ultimate wilderness; it contains all other wildernesses. Rangers often serve as pilots and navigators aboard remote starships. The big commercial hulks seek out rangers to fill mapping and navigation positions, in fact.

Rangers have a reputation for short stints with any given company. The tiny circuits that the enormous haulers travel pay fair money, but they don't scratch the



itch that all rangers have; those ships don't really go anywhere. This is why rangers are so common in smaller outfits. Rangers don't care about the cramped quarters, or the bad food, or the hard work, so long as the ship keeps going places.

Big corporate firms sometimes fill out whole ships with ranger crews to make the early trips to recently contacted worlds on the edge of the Empire. Rangers are good under pressure, they can handle themselves in a fight, and they're comfortable being on the edges of civilization. In short, they're perfect for the job.

Rogue

Like pilots, rogues are found on virtually every free trader vessel in the galaxy. They're natural negotiators, barterers, flatterers, and liars. They're essential to the work.

Multiclass rogues are even more common. Rogues stretch out into fighter levels to stay alive, bard levels to impress clients, and mechanist levels to get their ships home. Other classes develop roguish qualities to become comfortable with questionable business associates and flexible ethics, but also to learn the tricks that will be used against them.

As much as any freighter crew might say they'd prefer the job to be about diplomatic meetings, mutually beneficial deals, and exotic ports of call, every successful freighter captain has come up against back-stabbing merchants, lying agents, and two-faced customers. Freighter crews need rogues because they must be prepared for double-crosses and sneak attacks. They must be ready to evade corrupt port authorities and spot the traps local law enforcement sets for offworld scum. Galactic freight is a rogue's business.

Sorcerer and Wizard

Magic is a very real part of the business, though everyone says otherwise. Once cheats began using magic to disguise faulty merchandise (or conjure merchandise up altogether), honest crews had to start employing sorcerers or wizards to protect themselves. Spells can deceive and spells can reveal. It's best to be prepared.

Magic, of course, is also integral to the operation of

an interstellar vessel. While few spellcasters capable of recharging a *starcaster* would spend their days hopping around the galaxy on a freighter, the innate understanding that spellcasters have of magic makes them valuable to freighter captains. Of course, some unscrupulous sorcerers and wizards get jobs aboard freighters by claiming to know more than they do. Every wizard is an authority aboard a ship of ignorant commoners.

Most of a spellcaster's work has to do with cargo, though. Precious magical cargo is some of the most lucrative in the galaxy, and freighter crews need to know how to handle and identify such things. Arcane spellcasters also have spells that can contain, preserve, or repair physical goods. These spells are a hot commodity in the business.

One reason why sorcerers and wizards travel aboard freighters is one they like to keep secret. In order to refine and improve their mastery of magic, spellcasters often need to get out and learn, practice their craft, and hone their art. In theory, it's much safer to do this aboard a simple freighter than it is to join up with looters or grave-robbers.

Prestige Classes

This section presents four new prestige classes for use in your **Dragonstar** campaign, each drawn from organizations or professions common in the Smuggler's Run. The names and game mechanics of these classes are designated as **Open Game Content**. Each class's background and descriptive text is designated as closed content.

The Free Captain

There are many organizations for smugglers around the galaxy, from trading guilds to the Courier's League to the royal houses. But there are a brave few—some outcasts from these groups, others rugged individualists—who choose to face the perils of the galaxy on their own. These foolhardy individuals command their own starships, and are called free captains; streetwise men and women who rely on their wits, and sometimes their blasters, in pursuit of fame and fortune.

Free captains are almost universally well-traveled adventurers, with contacts in the most unlikely of places. Their experiences roving the galaxy have made them wise beyond their years and skilled in a variety of different fields and disciplines. This roundedness serves them well, for many free captains are smugglers and gunrunners, moving small caches of goods legal and otherwise between private parties using their own ships. Through their exploits, many free captains form an almost supernatural bond with their ships, which they can make move as they do and perform improbable stunts.

Multiclassed bard/pilots and rogue/pilots make excellent free captains; the pilot's natural affinity for travel and the roundedness of rogues and bards serve them well. Multiclassed rangers and mechanists can also be good free captains, where their skill with a blaster or with a spanner make the all the difference in getting their cargo safely to its final destination.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a free captain, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +3 or higher.
Bluff: 2 ranks
Pilot: 4 ranks
Repair: 2 ranks
Sense Motive: 4 ranks
Urban Lore: 4 ranks
Feats: Alertness, Technical Proficiency.
Special: The character must own a starship.

CLASS SKILLS

The free captain's class skills (and key abilities tied to those skills) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Freefall (Dex), Listen (Wis), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (Int), Urban Lore (Wis), and Use Device (Int)

Skill Points at Each level: 6 + Intelligence modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the free captain.

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: Free captains are proficient with simple weapons and with light armor. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand and Tumble skill checks. Also, Swim checks suffer double the normal armor check penalties.

Traveler's Knowledge: The free captain gains the equivalent of the bardic knowledge ability (see "Bard," PHB). The free captain may add his levels in this prestige class to his levels of bard for purposes of determining the effectiveness of his traveler's knowledge class ability.

Well-Rounded: Free captains are veteran starfarers

TABLE 2-1: THE CAPTAIN

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Traveler's knowledge, well-rounded
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Custom rig +1
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Gut instinct, well-rounded
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Nobody's Fool 1/day
5th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Acquaintances, well-rounded
6th	+4	+2	+5	+5	Custom rig +2
7th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Well-rounded
8th	+6	+2	+6	+6	Nobody's fool 2/day
9th	+6	+3	+6	+6	"C'mon, baby!" 1/day, well-rounded
10th	+7	+3	+7	+7	Custom rig +3

with colorful (some might even say checkered) pasts. Beginning at 1st level, the free captain may select a single cross-class skill to become a class skill. At 3rd level and every 2 levels thereafter, the free captain may select an additional cross-class skill to become a class skill.

Custom Rig (Ex): A free captain's ship is his home, his pride and his joy, and he enjoys a bond with it that few other pilots do. Beginning at 2nd level, the free captain may designate a single starship (typically his own ship) as his custom rig. The free captain must spend at least 1 month (typically in between adventures) doing nothing else other than working on or traveling in this ship to designate it as a custom rig. The free captain adds a +1 insight bonus to all rolls related to his custom rig, including skill checks, saving throws, and attack and damage rolls made with the weapons on the ship. At 6th level, this insight bonus increases to +2, and at 10th level, the bonus increases to +3.

If the free captain's custom rig is disabled or destroyed, he may spend another month working on and traveling in a new ship, after which time he may designate it as his custom rig.

Gut Instinct (Ex): Free trading is a dangerous business, and free captains develop an almost preternatural sense of danger. Beginning at 3rd level, if the free captain is surprised by an opponent, he may make a Sense Motive check (DC 10 + attacker's Hit Dice). If this check is successful, he is not considered flat-footed during the surprise round and may roll for initiative as normal.

Nobody's Fool (Ex): The free captain is a shrewd businessman with an innate understanding of others. Beginning at 4th level, once per day, the free captain may re-roll a single failed Diplomacy, Sense Motive, or Spot check. The free captain must accept the results of this second check, even if it is worse than the first. At 8th level, the free captain may use this ability twice per day.

Acquaintances: Free captains cultivate many business contacts and friends over the course of their careers. Beginning at 5th level, the free captain may call upon these acquaintances in times of need. To locate an acquaintance, the free captain must spend 2d6 hours

and make a Charisma check (DC 20), adding his class level to the result. The free captain may make this check only once per distinct area (city, regency, etc.) per adventure. If the free captain fails this check, he has no contacts in the area and may not use that ability in this area for the rest of the adventure.

If the check is successful, the free captain has reached a colleague who remembers him fondly, and offers the free captain his services. The free captain may choose to either borrow an item (up to a value of the free captain's character level x 500 cr), or for assistance. Treat this acquaintance as an NPC expert of a level equal to the free captain's class level, with maximum ranks in a skill of the free captain's choice (subject to the DM's approval). The acquaintance will assist the free captain in a single task (requiring no longer than a number of days equal to the free captain's class level), after which time the acquaintance returns to his normal life.

Although the free captain has many contacts, the relationships may quickly sour if he abuses their good will. Each time the free captain attempts to use an acquaintance beyond the first, the free captain must make a Diplomacy check (DC 15 + 5 per instance the free captain has called upon the acquaintance within a single month). If this check fails, the acquaintance's attitude towards the free captain is reduced by one step (so a friendly disposition is reduced to indifferent, etc.). Abusing the trust of an acquaintance (such as returning a borrowed item damaged, not repaying debts, or causing him direct physical danger) may automatically reduce the acquaintance's attitude by one. Directly attacking or deliberately betraying the acquaintance automatically reduces the acquaintance's attitude toward the free captain to unfriendly or worse (DM's discretion). If an acquaintance's attitude towards the free captain drops to unfriendly or below, the free captain may no longer attempt to call upon that acquaintance and may not use this ability in the area until he makes amends or develops a new acquaintance through role-playing. His reputation has been tarnished or ruined.

"C'mon, Baby!": Through a combination of extraordinary flying and sheer willpower, the free captain can push his ship beyond its normal limits. Once per day, the free captain may use this ability to achieve one of the following effects:

Perfect Interface (Ex): The free captain automatically succeeds on a single skill check involving his custom rig (including Navigate, Repair, Use Device, Pilot, etc.). If this ability is used for an opposed check, treat this use as a +20 competence bonus to the free captain's skill bonus instead.

Six Perfect Seconds (Ex): During combat, the free captain may add +20 to all attack rolls, saving throws, and the AC of his custom rig for a single combat round. Additionally, the free captain may ignore the effects of any criticals his custom rig has suffered until the end of this round.

The Freecaster's Club

PURPOSE

The Freecaster's Club is a chain of taverns, private clubs, and cafes across the galaxy that offer special services to starship captains who own their own vessels. Some Freecaster's Clubs are little more than a private booth in a larger bar, while others—such as that on Draconis—are posh chambers accessible only by members.

LEADER

Gram Granger (N half-elf male Pil4/Rog6/Fcp10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The only real service, aside from the occasional relief of a familiar face, that the Freecaster's Club offers is a communications network. In truth, it's little more than a rumor mill. Free captains meet at Freecaster's Clubs and swap stories of other captains, rough voyages, bad ports, and terrible cargoes. It was started as a private club by a dozen or so friendly captains and was expanded into a wider society by Gram Granger after the other eleven founding members died. Granger doesn't bother to take his ship out into the universe any more. He makes his money off of the Freecaster's Club on Draconis, which he runs. A cut of all membership dues (500 credits a year) end up in his accounts. With more than a million members across the Dragon Empire, Granger does quite well for himself just tending bar at his three-story glass-and-stone club.

The Freecaster's Club is no secret, but it does have a certain reputation for snobbery and elitism. Officially, anyone who owns his own freighter, free trader, or cargo ship can pay the dues and be a member, but that's not always the case. New members must be entered into the computer database at a club location by an established member. Some members turn down hopeful captains because they've fulfilled contracts for the aristocorps, hauled freight for the military, or been too friendly with an unpopular port authority somewhere.

Captains who do get inside enjoy a certain freedom of speech and access to the Club's 1,022 *ansibles*, where available. Plus, members enjoy a +4 bonus to Gather Information checks made with other members while inside Freecaster's Clubs.

One overriding rule presides at all Club locations: Everyone's friendly at the club. Rivalries, fueds, and bad blood are fair subject matter for conversations and debates, but fighting gets all participants thrown out of the club for life.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

Freecaster's Clubs exist all across the Empire, so it should be easy for player characters to find one. For the most part,the Club is little more than a means of getting information, but it can also be a great place for characters with the Leadership feat to drum up followers or cohorts. Out-of-work club members congregate for just that reason, in fact.

If the player characters have reason to check up on a fellow freighter crew, this is the way to do it. Likewise, big scores and big losses the characters suffer will eventually make it back to other members, who might show up to offer aid or spread the word that the characters are incompetent, depending on who their friends are.

Terrific role-playing encounters can develop when the PCs get to meet with an adversary over drinks at a Freecaster's Club. This makes it possible for the characters to get a real sense of their competitor's personality without the scene heading straight into a bar fight. The Freecaster's Club may not have any secret plans or conquests of its own, but it is a fine tool for introducing new characters and campaign information to the player characters.

The Corsair

While the shipping lanes of the Imperial core are heavily policed and carefully guarded by agents of the Empire, the remote trade routes of the Outlands remain treacherous paths fraught with danger. Pirates rank foremost amongst these perils; these parasites make their living lurking on remote planets and abandoned asteroids, springing ambushes on isolated ships, stealing their cargo, and fleeing off into wild space once again.

Corsairs are some of the most fearsome and charismatic pirates, swashbucklers and scallywags who prowl star systems and spaceways in search of their next big score. They are daring raiders and fearsome combatants who can strip a ship of its wealth before the local authorities even receive the distress call. The wealth and fame garnered by many corsairs also attracts throngs of men and women of a like mind to their side, who serve as comrades and crew in their dirty business.

Bards and rogues make excellent corsairs, with their contacts with the more unsavory elements of society and larcenous skills affording them a significant advantage over uninformed plunderers. Fighters and rangers also fare well as corsairs, as skill in combat and a knack for survival can spell success for the harsh life of a space pirate.

Hit die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a corsair, a character must meet all of the following requirements.

Alignment: Any non-lawful.

Freefall: 4 ranks

Intimidate: 8 ranks

Navigate: 4 ranks

Feats: Born Spacer, Point Blank Shot.

CLASS SKILLS

The class skills (and key abilities for each) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Demolitions (Int), Freefall (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Urban Lore (Wis), and Use Device (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the corsair.

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: Corsairs are proficient with all simple and martial weapons and with light armor. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble skill checks. Also, Swim checks suf-

TABLE 2.2: THE CORSAIR

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+0	+2	+0	Close quarters fighting (Combat Reflexes), notorious +1
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+0	Plunder (full time)
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+1	Notorious +2
4th	+4	+1	+4	+1	Leadership, raider
5th	+5	+1	+4	+1	Close quarters fighting (Pressing Attack), notorious +3
6th	+6	+2	+5	+2	Daring ambush, share the wealth
7th	+7	+2	+5	+2	Notorious +4
8th	+8	+2	+6	+2	Plunder (50% time)
9th	+9	+3	+6	+3	Close quarters fighting (attack of opportunity), notorious +5
10th	+10	+3	+7	+3	Scourge of the spaceways

fer double the normal armor check penalties.

Close-Quarters Fighting (Ex): Corsairs are highly experienced in ship-to-ship fighting and boarding actions, and know how to use their environment to their benefit. At 1st level, when fighting in a ship or other enclosed space, the corsair gains the benefits of the Combat Reflexes feat.

At 5th level, when fighting in a ship or other enclosed space, the corsair also gains the benefits of the Pressing Attack feat.

At 9th level, when fighting in a ship or other enclosed space, the corsair's threatened area is considered 10 feet larger than his reach (so a corsair with a normal reach of 5 feet would threaten an area out to 15 feet away), but only in regards to ranged weapons. If an opponent takes an action that normally provokes an attack of opportunity within this area, the corsair may make a ranged attack of opportunity against that opponent using a ranged weapon that is currently loaded and drawn (so a corsair holding a blaster could make a ranged attack of opportunity, but a corsair holding an unloaded crossbow or wearing a holstered pistol could not).

Notorious (Ex): Through daring raids and huge hauls, corsairs quickly develop a reputation that spans star systems. Beginning at 1st level, the corsair adds a +1 competence bonus to all Intimidate checks he makes and to his Leadership score for the purposes of attracting followers. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at 3rd level and every two levels thereafter.

Plunder: Corsairs are experts at conducting lightning-fast raids and salvage missions that can turn them a great profit. Beginning at 2nd level, the corsair may either raid a captured ship for credits and the personal possessions of its crew, or strip it down for useful parts and items for resale on the black market. The time required and yield of plunder depends on the size of the ship, as noted below:

Raid – The corsair quickly ransacks the ship, robbing passengers at gunpoint and grabbing any loose items of value before fleeing. Raiding a ship only requires the corsair be on board and to have suppressed the crew temporarily (such as with an Intimidate check, PHB v3.5, page 76) while he makes away with the loot.

Strip – The corsair strips the ship down to the bare parts for anything of value, leaving only a worthless hulk in his wake. The corsair must first commandeer the ship and any crew on board for as long as it takes for him to completely strip the ship. This time includes finding a fence to sell the stripped items on the black market.

The corsair may make no other actions of significance while plundering a ship, though he may return to the work later if distracted or interrupted. If the corsair is interrupted at any point while plundering a ship, he may escape and still collect an amount of credits equal to the last full time increment he completed.

Example:

Gorax the corsair is raiding a Gargantuan passenger ship (time required: 1 hour). If an Imperial patrol boat appears on the scope after 45 minutes, Gorax may choose to stop plundering and escape with the next lowest amount (30 minutes' worth): 500 credits.

At 8th level, the corsair reduces the time to plunder a ship by half.

Leadership: At 4th level, the corsair gains the Leadership feat. If the corsair already has the Leadership feat, he adds a permanent +2 bonus to his Leadership score instead.

Table 2–3: Plunder

Ship Size	Raid	Strip
Medium	5 minutes/100 cr	2 hours/500 cr
Large	10 minutes/200 cr	4 hours/1000 cr
Huge	30 minutes/500 cr	8 hours/2,500 cr
Gargantuan	1 hour/1,000 cr	1 day/5,000 cr
Colossal	2 hours/2,000 cr	2 days/10,000 cr
Colossal II	3 hours/4,000 cr	4 days/20,000 cr
Colossal III	4 hours/8,000 cr	6 days/40,000 cr
Colossal IV	6 hours/15,000 cr	10 days/80,000 cr
Colossal V	8 hours/30,000 cr	14 days/150,000 cr
Colossal VI	12 hours/60,000 cr	1 month/300,000 cr

Raider: At 4th level, the corsair has developed a knack for choosing targets based on their cargo. When plundering a ship, the corsair may voluntarily reduce the amount of credits in plunder to acquire a single item (standard or magical). The value of this item may be no higher than half the total credit value of the plunder the corsair would collect normally from this type of plunder action.

Example:

Gorax has boarded a Gargantuan deuterium tanker (yield 1000 credits), but needs a new weapon for his next heist. He reduces the credits he would collect by one-half, to 500 credits, and selects a weapon worth 500 credits or less.

Daring Ambush (Ex): The corsair often relies on the element of surprise to defeat his opponents, and can press this advantage to the limit. Beginning at 6th level, the corsair may take a full action during a surprise round in which he has surprised an opponent (rather than a standard action as normal).

Share the Wealth (Ex): At 6th level, the corsair may spread the wealth from his plunder to increase the morale of his men. When plundering a ship, the corsair may voluntarily receive half the normal amount of credits in plunder to add a morale bonus equal to his Charisma modifier (minimum +1) to all skill checks and saving throws made by his followers for a number of days equal to the size category of the ship plundered. If the ship has been stripped instead of raided, this bonus lasts for 2 days per size category of the ship instead.

Example:

Gorax and his crew have raided a Gargantuan ship, and Gorax would like to share the wealth with his followers. Referring to Table 2–3, he reduces the credits he would receive from this plunder by one-half to provide his followers with a morale bonus on all skill checks and saving throws equal to his Charisma modifier for 4 days (since Gargantuan ships are 4th on Table 2–3). He and his men celebrate in their hidden orbital lair with plundered ale. If Gorax had stripped the ship instead, this benefit would last for 8 days.

Scourge of the Spaceways (Ex): The most successful corsairs develop a fearsome reputation that stretches across the stars. At 10th level, the corsair may cash in on this reputation to intimidate others. When the corsair uses this ability, all opponents within 30 feet of the corsair must make a Will save (DC 10 + the corsair's Intimidate bonus). Anyone who fails this save suffers a penalty equal to the corsair's Charisma modifier on all attack rolls, damage rolls and skill checks versus the corsair or his followers for a number of rounds equal to the corsair's character level. The corsair may use this ability a number of times per day equal to his Wisdom modifier (minimum 1).

The Black Shark

PURPOSE

The Black Shark is a band of pirates operating in the Smuggler's Run and getting rich off fast, non-violent incursions on commercial freight haulers.

LEADER

Domick Arudell (CN human male Pil3/Rog7/Cor10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Frustrated and robbed freighter captains in the Smuggler's Run region, at the edge of Imperial space, have given the name the Black Shark to a single, tenacious pirate vessel operating in the Persilom and Monscrome systems. The group is known for civil, even peaceful robberies on commercial freighers. Their leader, Domick, tells every freighter captain he encounters the same life lesson: "A sheep can be sheared again, but skinned just the once." This nugget of wisdom comes at the end of every robbery.

Except one. There is a tale told in the pilot's bars on Persilom that the Black Shark was responsible for one terrible act of brutality against a corporate shipping vessel in the Monscrome system. Supposedly the crew resisted Domick's men, so the pirate and his men gave the crew back their belongings, then spaced the freighter crew one at a time, starting with the captain. When they tried to cooperate, he kept on going.

Domick's ship has been notoriously difficult for authorities to locate. Besides being very stealthy, it is astonishingly fast. It swoops out of the penumbral shadows of a planet's moon, hits ships as they prepare to engage their *starcaster*, and then *teleports* away itself. The pirates seldom steal cargo, but when they do they seem to have come for specific goods and have known just where to find them.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

Domick fancies himself a civilized man, and indeed was for a great while. He was a freighter captain for many years before he turned to piracy. He's been in the pirate business for years, but only just came to the Run to make his fortune before the dragons and their people arrive. He makes educated guesses about ships and cargo and is usually right.

If the player characters are lawful sorts, then Domick could serve as an interesting villain and philosophical opponent. Since Domick doesn't hurt people, he believes that he has every right to continue his work until such time as he gets outmaneuvered by the law. When that times comes, he'll be due whatever he gets from the justice system. Domick figures that an outlaw who doesn't hurt anyone is preferable to a rightful tyrant who does, like Mezzenbone.

If the player characters are chaotic, Domick could serve as their introduction (or seduction) into the world of piracy. Domick and his men lead a pretty comfortable life without the risks that so many pirates run. If there's a problem with his life, in Domick's eyes, it's that he and his men aren't headed anywhere. They have no goals other than to just keep on plundering.

The issue for the player characters either way is whether the tales of Domick's mass murder are true. He's not telling, and none of his men seem intereested in sharing what they know.

The House Trader

The Dragon Empire is filled with countless merchant guilds, responsible for the movement of goods and capital across the stars. Foremost among these traders are the men and women of the noble Merchant Houses—ancient, powerful, and fabulously rich mercantile families spawned at the dawn of the Empire. Time and resourcefulness have granted merchants of the houses wealth and respect second to (some would say rivaling) that of some dragons and their kin.

The house trader is an agent of a merchant house, typically. These consummate professionals rove the stars, closing lucrative deals with merchants on backwater planets one day and navigating the halls of power on Draconis Prime the next. House traders combine an intuitive understanding of business and people,

TABLE 2–4: THE HOUSE TRADER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	In demand, authoritative haggle (10%)
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Business sense +2
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Wealthy 1/adventure
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Appraiser's eye (detect magic), business sense +3, authoritative haggle (20%)
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Connected
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Business sense +4, wealthy 2/adventure
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Authoritative haggle (30%)
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	Appraiser's eye (identify), business sense +5
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Wealthy 3/adventure
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Business sense +6, wheel and deal 1/day

an extraordinary eye for the appraisal and evaluation of goods, and a ruthless knack for negotiation to create a businessman unparalleled in the galaxy.

Bards and rogues are the best house traders, where their people-skills let them truly shine. Multiclassed mechanists can also be good traders, as their ability to work with technology makes them shrewd buyers and sellers of scientific and antique items alike.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a house trader, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Appraise: 8 ranks
Diplomacy: 4 ranks
Profession (Trader): 6 ranks
Sense Motive: 4 ranks
Speak Language: Gevisan
Feats: Etiquette

CLASS SKILLS

The class skills (and key abilities for each) of the house trader are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Innuendo (Cha), Knowledge (politics) (Int), Knowledge (trade) (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Research (Int), Repair (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (Int), Use Device (Int), and Use Magic Device (Cha)

Skill Points at Each Level: 8 + Int modifier per level.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: The house trader gains no additional weapon or armor proficiencies. The merchant houses have much more affordable agents to lose in combat. A house trader is armed with guile and limitless fortunes instead.

In Demand (Ex): Traders of the merchant houses are highly prized for their skills as appraisers, and have no trouble finding businesses in need of their services. Beginning at 1st level, when the house trader uses his Profession (trader) skill to collect income, he may do so in merely 2 days rather than the normal 5. Additionally, the income collected from this work is equal to the result of his check times 50 credits (rather than the standard 25).

Authoritative Haggle (Ex): House traders are assumed by common businessfolk to be experts in their field. Beginning at 1st level, the house trader may use his keen knowledge of trade and bartering techniques to adjust the price of an item when buying and selling. The house trader may make an Appraise check, opposed by his target's Sense Motive skill. If the house trader wins this opposed check, the price of the item in question is adjusted by 10% (in favor of the house trader). At 4th level, the amount the price may be adjusted increases to 20%; at 7th level, the adjustment increases to 30%. This adjustment is in addition to any adjustments based on supply or demand; it is a purely artificial adjustment of worth based on the house trader's word.

Business Sense (Ex): House traders are consummate businesspeople, as skilled at reading people as

they are precious items. At 2nd level, the house trader adds a +2 bonus to all Appraise, Profession (trader), and Sense Motive checks he makes. This bonus increases by an additional +1 at 4th level and every 2 levels thereafter.

Wealthy: The interstellar merchant houses are fantastically wealthy, and the house trader may draw upon his house's fortune in times of need. Once per month, the house trader may declare his wish to tap his house's savings account to fund his current endeavor. He must spend 4 hours at a bank or credit terminal processing the necessary forms and authenticating his account, after which time he receives 1000 times his class level in credits. At 6th and 9th level, the house trader may use this ability an additional time per month.

Appraiser's Eye (Sp): House traders have an uncanny ability to discern the most minute details in the goods they examine. Beginning at 4th level, the house trader may spend a full action examining an item and identify the presence of magic in that item, just as if he had cast *detect magic*. At 8th level, when the house trader uses this ability to examine an item, he learns information just as if he had cast both *detect magic* and *identify* on that item. The house trader may use this ability a number of times per day equal to his class level. This is a spell-like ability.

Connected: Members of the merchant houses maneuver in some of the most elite circles of Imperial society, and may leverage those connections to their advantages. Beginning at 6th level, the house trader may attempt to use his standing to gain access to restricted areas and events. The house trader must make a Charisma check with a DC depending on the type of area he wishes to gain access to, adding his class level to the result. If this check succeeds, the house trader gains access to the resource in question. The house trader may use this ability a number of times per day equal to his Charisma modifier.

DC	Area/Event Type
5	Very common (public place, good seats at a public performance)
10	Common (private residence, closed meeting)
15	Uncommon (local government building, closed government meeting)
20	Restricted (Military facility, exclusive meeting, spaceport operations center)
25	Exclusive (Imperial residence, secret meeting of royal court)

Wheel and Deal (Ex): Beginning at 10th level, once per day, the house trader may convince others to make the most implausible business deals through his flawless bargaining techniques. The house trader makes an offer to the target, and the target makes a Will save (DC 15 + the house trader's Charisma modifier + 1/2 the house trader's class level). The target gains a +5 bonus to this save if the offer proposed by the house trader is obviously unfair to him (trading a precious artifact for commonplace electronics, for example), or a +10 to the save if the offer is truly outrageous (giving the house trader a starship for free). If the target fails this save, he accepts the offer.

The Gevise Family

PURPOSE

For hundreds of generations, the Gevises have owned fleets of trading ships, vast orbital emporiums, and elaborate private palaces; they want nothing more than to keep a good hold on their fortune, and watch it swell.

LEADER

Matalia Gevise (N human female, Ari5/Rog5/Hst10)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The primary economic force in the Smuggler's Run is the Gevise family. Their merchant fleet crowds the skies over Persilom, fixes prices throughout the system, and blazes new trails of commerce throughout the Run. No indigenous peoples, competitors, or governments short of the dragons get in their way.

The Gevises are a huge family. Literally millions of people bear their name in Asamet alone. Their business practices are praised by the richest folks and crush the poorest folks, but they're not alone in their celebrated success. Other trading houses operate in the Empire and in the Run, so the Gevises are forever repositioning themselves, strategizing, and scheming.

Gevise operations are extremely top-heavy. Gevise freighter captains make twice what any independent captain could hope to make in a year, but the crews who operate Gevise ships are paid next to nothing. The system of the familial houses is based on seniority, so lowly new employees earn a pauper's wage (or less) for their trouble, but if they stick around they will be promoted. Fifteen or 20 years of promotions can lead to hundreds of thousands of credits in pay and command of a starfreighter. The most loyal, most respected members of the business may eventually be welcomed into the family through marriage.

The Gevises aren't of royal blood, so they are eager to set up new markets in frontier territories before Mezzenbone's people arrive. Gevise ships carry sophisticated weaponry and defenses and it costs a great deal

to pay off the hundreds of Imperial officials necessary to cross jurisdictions with that firepower. The Gevises are constantly under-reporting the capabilities of their fleets. Mezzenbone would never tolerate the sheer firepower the family is fielding across the galaxy, were he to find out about it.

Whatever goals the family as a whole once had, they've been replaced by a consuming greed. Individual members of the house may have much more noble or dangerous aspirations, however.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

There's a fortune in money for anyone willing to deal with the Gevises. The house may offer overflow shipments to private freighter captains once or twice. When they do, they overpay by as much as two or three times what the run should be worth. That's how they get you.

Once a crew has tasted the Gevise family fortune, they're cut off unless they come into the fold and sign five-, 10-, or 15-year contracts. Anyone who does becomes a pawn in the financial power-plays of the Gevise elders. The family is a byzantine network that virtually no one escapes. Those who do make enemies of the Gevises.

The Gevise family makes a great villain. They're power-hungry, greedy, treacherous, and look down on anyone who won't do business with them. Introducing the Gevise family into a campaign is easy; they're behind millions of storefronts and factories across the galaxy. It could be that the player characters made enemies of the Gevises a long time ago and are only now finding out.

The League Runner

Communication has long been one of the most critical and consistent problems of the Dragon Empire. Sending messages across thousands of light years is tedious, and space travel treacherous in and of itself. To combat this problem, in the year 350 of the Brass Age (3350 IE), Emperor Harotep sponsored the formation of the Imperial Courier's League, an elite organization of the Dragon Empire's best pilots and navigators to deliver the most critical Imperial communiqués and decrees.

For nearly 2000 years, the League was the sole carrier for the Dragon Court. To be a runner for the League was the pinnacle of many pilots' careers, and the aspiration of many thousands more. But since the dawn of the Red Age, the Courier's League has slowly lost favor with the Dragon Court, and with it much of the prestige it once enjoyed. Mezzenbone prefers his decrees to travel through other mediums: the ISPD, *ansibles,* and hushed, frightened whispers.

Today, the League remains active, but is a pale reflection of its former self. Instead of a tightly knit fraternity of starfarers, the organization has devolved to a loose rabble of mercenaries and hotshot pilots looking for their next score. While many runners still make their primary income from Imperial contracts, less scrupulous runners are couriers and bagmen for some of the most notorious organizations in the galaxy. Either way, most runners don't care—as long as their client's credit is good.

Rangers and pilots make the best league runners, where their innate talents of travel and navigation serve them well. Bards and rogues frequently find work with the League transporting "extralegal" cargo to some of the rougher parts of the Empire. Surprisingly, even a few paladins find work as runners, typically as bounty hunters or less-than-royal marshals delivering criminals to prisons and their orders for judgment.

Hit Die: d6.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a league runner, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

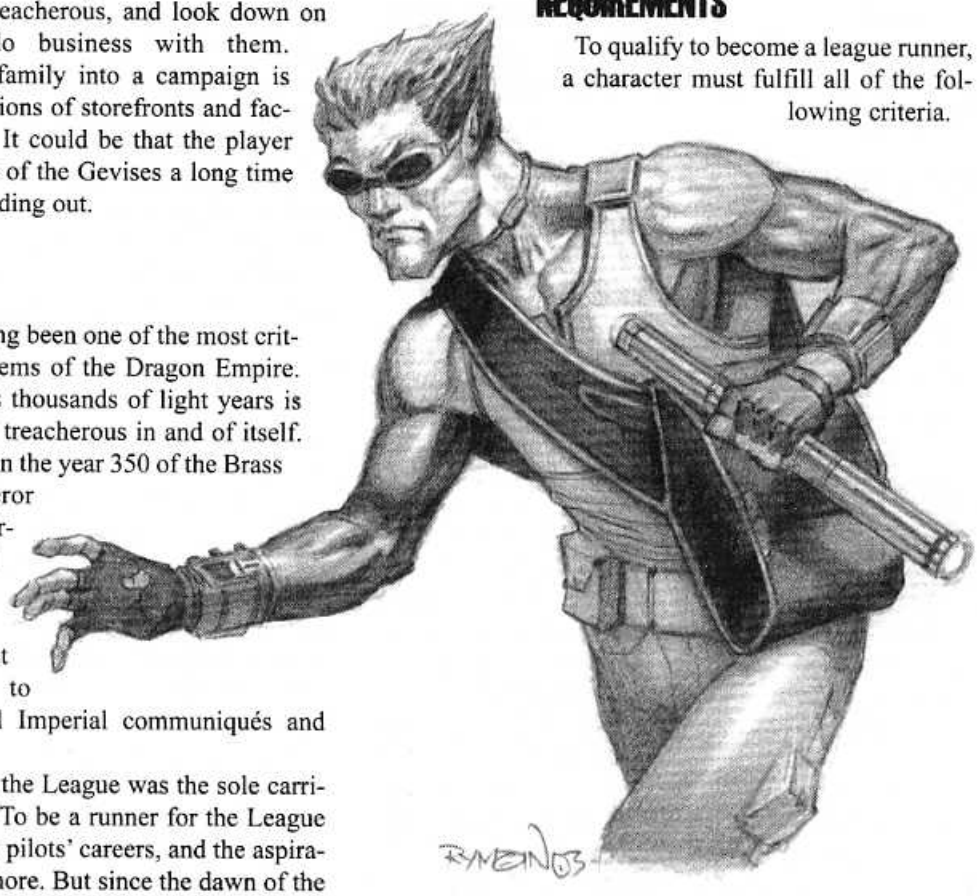


TABLE 2–5: THE LEAGUE RUNNER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Runner's guile (skills)
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Expert navigator (–5)
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Shortcut (75% time)
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Cool head
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Runner's guile (stowage)
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	Expert navigator (–10)
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	Getaway
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	Shortcut (50% time)
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	Runner's guile (detection)
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Expert navigator (limited mishap), Vanish 1/day

Navigate: 8 ranks.

Pilot: 8 ranks.

Use Device: 4 ranks.

Feats: Space Jockey, Starship Piloting, Technical Proficiency.

Special: Must join the Imperial Courier's League, either by defeating a current member in a competition of piloting and navigation skills or bribing a League head 4d6 x 1000 credits.

CLASS SKILLS

The league runner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Freefall (Dex), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Repair (Int), Spot (Wis), and Use Device (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the league runner.

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: League runners are proficient with simple weapons and light armor. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble skill checks. Also, Swim checks suffer double the normal armor check penalties.

Runner's Guile (Ex): League runners are frequently charged with transporting "less than legal" cargo, and thus become quite skilled at evading detection by the authorities. At first level, once per adventure, the league runner may designate an item or object no larger than 10 feet by 10 feet, and no more than 500 pounds, to be his cargo. At 1st level, the league runner gains a +5 competence bonus to all skill checks to conceal information about his client or the presence and contents of his cargo.

At 5th level, the league runner may spend an hour concealing his cargo in such a way (hiding or disguising) that it is almost impossible to discern its true identity. There is a 5% chance that the cargo is recognized: only a natural 20 on a Spot or Search check will reveal the stowed cargo for what it is.

At 9th level, the runner can expertly cross borders or move through restricted areas leaving local authorities none the wiser. The DC of all skill checks to detect the presence of the runner's ship or to track his movements while transporting his cargo are increased by an amount equal to his class level.

Expert Navigator (Ex): League runners routinely cross great distances in their craft, and know how to wring the most out of their *starcasters*. Beginning at 2nd level, the DCs of all Use Device checks the league runner makes to plot a *starcaster*-powered *teleport* are reduced by 5. At 6th level, the DCs of these checks are reduced by 10; at 10th level, the league runner experiences *teleport* mishaps one category less catastrophic, when they occur at all. Any numeric effects of the mishap (such as damage suffered) are reduced by half.

Shortcut (Ex): The Courier's League provides exhaustive maps and resources to its runners that can greatly expedite their travel times. Beginning at 3rd level, the league runner may make a Navigate check to

see if he can find a faster path to his destination; the DC of this check is determined by how well-known the area is. If this check is successful, the time required to make the trip is reduced to 75% of normal. At 8th level, when the league runner succeeds on this Navigate check, the time required is reduced to 50% of normal.

DC	Area
10	Very well known (Imperial capital, area with heavy Imperial presence)
15	Average (on an Imperial world, area with usual Imperial presence)
20	Remote (on an Outlands world, area with light Imperial presence)
25	Isolated (on the galactic fringe, no Imperial presence)

Cool Head (Ex): At 4th level, the league runner may take 10 on a number of Pilot, Navigate, or Use Device checks per day equal to his character level, even if circumstances or distractions would not normally allow it.

Getaway (Ex): League runners are experts at evading pursuers intent on capturing their cargo. At 6th level, the league runner may add his Wisdom modifier (in addition to his Dex modifier) to all Pilot skill checks when attempting to escape or evade attacks (see *Starfarer's Handbook*, pages 158–159). Additionally, the league runner gains a dodge bonus equal to his Wisdom modifier to the AC of a craft he is piloting.

Vanish (Ex): At 10th level, once per day, the league runner can put forth all his effort to escape a pursuer or attacker and vanish into the stars. The league runner rolls his Pilot skill, with a bonus equal to half his ship's Stealth rating, opposed by the Use Device skill of all enemy sensor operators. If the league runner wins the opposed check, he baffles his opponents by vanishing from their scopes altogether. The league runner's ship is removed from the current encounter and exits the area at his vessel's current Speed along any vector desired.

The Courier's League

PURPOSE

The Courier's League was a prestigious group of trustworthy and capable interstellar messengers. Now they're a defunct, scattered bunch of capable hot-shots and messengers.

LEADER

None

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

In the years since the Courier's League fell out of favor with the Dragon Court, the reputation of its individual members has been ruined. Most citizens of the Empire don't know much about the League, and consider the messengers who travel in its name to be strange fly-by-night sorts or criminals. Many bearers of the league's symbol are, in fact, just that.

A finite number of notarized letters were crafted for the runners of the Courier's League, and the current members swap those letters back and forth as prizes for dares and bets. No more letters can be made, and so no more members can officially join the League. Memberships just get passed back and forth between the racers who know where to find them.

Still, a small number of runners make legitimate use of their letters and work as messengers for honorable organizations. When good people need an important message to be sent some place terrible—and they can find a former courier of the League to help—honorable league runners take the job. This puts them at odds with some of the authorities in Asamet, but the remaining runners pose no threat and might one day be useful, so the agents of Asamet let them go about their work.

CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

What's left of the Courier's League is so scattered and laughably undisciplined that it's no surprise the player characters haven't heard of them before. League runners are seldom in any one place for long, but they do remember favors and the faces of friendly strangers. Player characters could cross paths with a runner almost anywhere. Once they have, that runner could turn up again.

Runners sometimes need ships and might hire the player characters to help them deliver a message, if their ship is fast enough. Some runners have transitioned completely into the freight business, and could become rivals of the PCs (friendly or otherwise). The PCs might even be friends with a former league runner and not know it until she spins a drunken yarn about the "good old days."

Perhaps the most intriguing way to introduce the Courier's League into the campaign is to have the PCs come into possession of a notarized letter of the League. The letter alone could lead the characters into all sorts of entertaining trouble before they even learn about the League's original charter or meet any of its members.

Skills

This section covers a few new ways to make use of

the skills commonly available in the **Dragonstar** setting. This section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

Profession

Though the best traders are well-versed in many skills, the Profession (trader) skill is the great constant in the business. It's the skill that covers all the boring, necessary tasks of the job: the paperwork, the numbers, the protocols, and the conduct. Like any Profession skill, you can make Profession (trader) checks to earn a weekly wage. The real money is made during adventures, though.

Repair

This skill is essential to the proper maintenance and upkeep of complex vehicles like starships. Repair checks must be made periodically on a starship to keep everything in top shape, even when a vessel is undamaged. When maintenance checks are made is up to the ship's engineer, since each Repair check costs money to perform (see Maintenance, page 51). The longer a Repair check is put off, the higher the DC.

Research

You can use the Research skill to sift through business news, commodities reports, and want ads from all over the galaxy on the InfoNet. This lets you find the right cargo runs, the right ports, and the right customers for your business. It's easier to browse the entire local information dump than it is to carefully scan a hundred different specialized information services from across the galaxy, but browsing takes longer. The better your Research check, the more the leads you turn up manage to fit your needs. See Chapter 1: Business for more information.

You can also use this skill to investigate rumors and learn a little something about clients, their cargo, and their previous business dealings. By very carefully scrutinizing records you can get an edge in contract negotiations and other dealings. In game terms, succeeding at more difficult Research checks grants you a +2 insight bonus to Diplomacy, Bluff, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks in your next encounter with the subject of your research. The DC of this check is 15 plus all applicable modifiers:

DC	Example
+5	Subject is a small-time operator
+5	Subject does business 10+ LY away
+10	Subject does business 100+ LY away
+10	Subject has the resources to protect his history
–5	Subject is famous
–5	Subject does business all over the galaxy
–10	Subject is famous for his business dealings

Looking to Hire

Former House Gevise pilot seeks crew to operate *Iron Dragon* transport out of Monscrome. Pay is one share per mate, with two shares retained by me as owner. Vessel is a fixer-upper, 45 million miles, comes staffed with four robot laborers. Open positions for business manager, mechanic, pilot, customs officer, and security chief. Former Gevise contractors need not apply. Jobs include cargo runs to the Imperial interior with options for free trade. Contact Donovan, Monscrome (1331.2467.22)

Sleight of Hand

Use the Sleight of Hand skill to slip a discreet bribe to a port inspector or pass a secret note without being seen. To avoid being caught by onlookers, make a Sleight of Hand check opposed by the onlooker's Spot check. With sensors and recording devices all over the galaxy, onlooker's need not make their Spot checks live on the scene or even at the moment when your Sleight of Hand check is made. Spot checks to notice a discreet hand-off through recorded media suffer a –2 to –6 circumstance penalty, depending on the quality of the recording. See the Spot entry below.

When slipping a bribe to a willing participant who understands what's going on, add the accomplice's Dexterity modifier as a circumstance bonus to your check.

You can plant an object on an unwilling subject by making a Sleight of Hand check against DC 20. Your check is opposed by the Spot check of your subject, so even if you successfully plant an object on your subject you may be caught in the act.

Speak Language

The great merchant houses of the galaxy have been in business for thousands of years across thousands of

planets. Besides developing their own customs, cultures, and traditions, they've also developed their own languages. These are wholly artificial languages, created from a mixture of pidgin languages, blended dialects, business jargon, and vernacular, designed millenia ago with roots that spread across many linguistic groups but reach too deeply into none of them. The merchant houses are very protective of their trade secrets, and they only discuss them in their own tongues. Over the years, the languages have swollen and changed like any living language, but still they are kept within the company as much as possible.

A complete list of merchant house languages is impossible, since the number of byzantine familial corporations is based totally on the needs of your own **Dragonstar** campaign. House languages are usually just given the name of their parent family. The Gevises who have moved into the Smuggler's Run, for example, speak Gevisan.

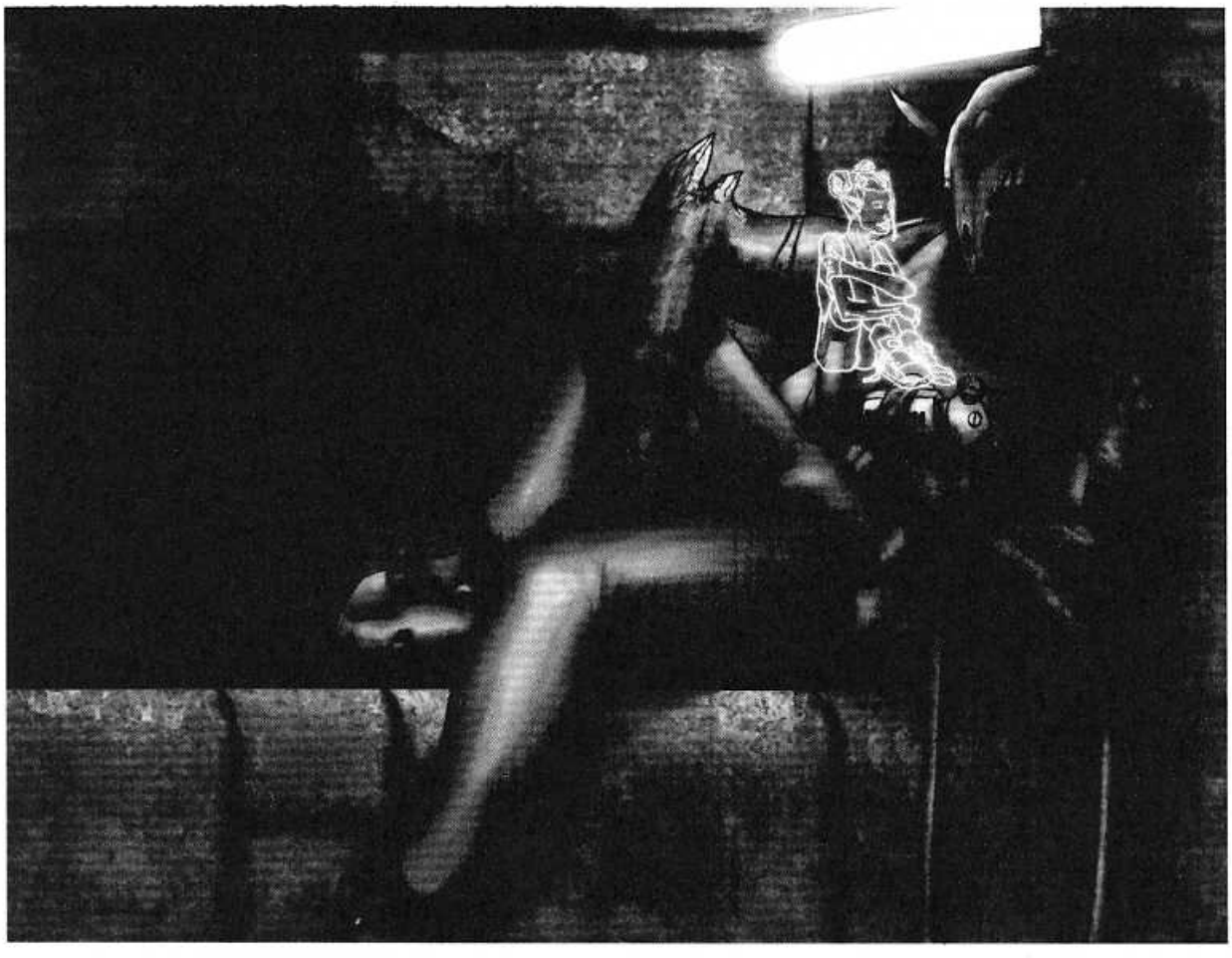
Spot

The starports of advanced and modern cities are covered in sensors and recording devices. This allows a small number of very qualified inspectors to oversee all starport operations without wasting their time on routine cargo inspections. Thus, many smuggling operations underestimate a port's security by judging the quality of the common workers. Those smugglers may pass freely through a planet's customs gate only to be confronted and arrested hours or even days later, when the footage of their illegal activities has been fully analyzed.

You can make a Spot check to oppose Sleight of Hand and Disguise checks even through remote sensors and recorded media days or weeks after the events take place. Your Spot check is modified by the quality of the sensor or the recording.

Modifier	Example
–2	High-quality sensor or recording
–4	Average sensor or recording
–6	Poor-quality sensor or recording
+2	Multiple recording angles

Special: Without the Technical Proficiency feat, you take a –2 penalty to media-based Spot checks. If you have 5 or more ranks in the Use Device skill you get a +2 bonus to Spot checks made with sensors.



Feats

This section presents an assortment of new feats for use in the **Dragonstar** campaign setting. Most, if not all, of these feats could be of interest to characters in any style of **Dragonstar** campaign. This section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

Camera Shy [General]

You have a knack for minimizing your visibility to cameras and other visual recorders.

Prerequisite: Hide skill, Disguise skill, Technical Proficiency

Benefit: Whenever you are exposed to visual recording equipment, you may make a free Disguise check or Hide check with a +4 bonus to obscure your identity in the recording or sensor feed. Anyone attempting to identify you remotely must oppose your skill check with a Spot check. Your obfuscation isn't necessarily subtle or misleading, it merely invalidates the usefulness of the recording. You don't need to prepare a disguise to use this feat. If you're unaware that you're being recorded, you suffer a –10 penalty to your skill check.

Careful Scrutiny

You have a precise eye for detail and a patience that pays off.

Prerequisite: Int 11+, Wis 13+

Benefit: You get a +4 bonus to Search checks when you take 20. You also suffer no penalties when making Spot checks through remote feeds or recordings.

Reward

Persilom Surveillance Bureau offers a 10,000 credit reward for any information leading to the capture of fraudulent and thieving free captains operating out of the Monscrome starport. Information regarding any local smuggling operations will be rewarded. Special compensation for information leading to the arrest of the Black Shark. Inquire about bounties and privateer licenses being issued for the Persilom and Monscrome systems by the ISPD. Some considerations will be made for those informers concerned with self-incrimination. Contact: ISPD-PSB-001.

Deeply Intimidating [General]

Your imposing presence and forceful technique cuts deep into people's psyche. When you intimidate enemies, it sticks with them.

Prerequisite: Cha 15+

Benefit: When you use the Intimidate skill to demoralize foes in combat (see PHB), they remain shaken for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier. A shaken character suffers a –2 penalty on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

Normal: Without this feat, demoralized foes are shaken for one round only.

Disable At Range [General]

You can use a ranged weapon to make Disable Device checks.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +5 or higher, Disable Device skill, Technical Proficiency

Benefit: If you succeed at a ranged attack against an object susceptible to both your attack and the Disable Device skill, you may make a Disable Device check against the object in addition to dealing damage to it.

Normal: You can only make Disable Device checks on objects you can reach.

Special: Mechanists may choose this feat as one of their bonus feats for the class (*Starfarer's Handbook*, page 54).

Exciting Tales [General]

You draw on the everyday experiences of your exciting life to weave tales that audiences love.

Benefit: You gain a +2 synergy bonus to Perform checks if you have 5 or more ranks in any one Craft, Knowledge, or Profession skill. This bonus increases to +4 when you have 10 or more ranks in any one Craft, Knowledge, or Profession skill. There is no benefit to having 5 or more ranks in multiple Craft, Knowledge, or Profession skills.

Feel For the Road [General]

You have an unusually good sense of how a vehicle reacts to rough terrain.

Prerequisites: Pilot skill, Technical Proficiency, Wis 11+

Benefit: Reduce all terrain penalties by one-half for any vehicle you are piloting. This applies to take-off and landing checks for aircraft and spacecraft as well.

Fit In [General]

You have an intuitive grasp of local customs, dialects, and behaviors.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all Disguise and Gather Information checks.

Good Listener [General]

You have a trustworthy quality that helps strangers feel comfortable opening up to you.

Prerequisite: Cha 13+

Benefit: You make Gather Information checks in half the time it would normally take. This feat also grants a +2 bonus to Gather Information checks.

Normal: A Gather Information check usually takes a full evening.

Heavy-Helmer [General]

You're unusually adept at handling large and heavy starships.

Prerequisites: Pilot skill, Starship Piloting, Technical Proficiency

Benefit: When piloting Colossal or larger vehicles, you ignore up to 4 points in handling penalties. If the vessel's handling score is –1 or better, you gain a +2 to Pilot checks in that vehicle, instead.

Illogical Input [General]

You know how to communicate with robots in a way that stalls and confuses them.

Prerequisite: Gearhead, Int 13+, Technical Proficiency, Use Device skill

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus to Bluff and Disguise checks with subject robots. You can also make a Use Device skill check (DC 25) to cause any robot that is receptive to your audio inputs to waste time processing unacceptable commands. The robot is effectively dazed for one round.

Innocent Demeanor [General]

You have a cute, simple, or otherwise innocent demeanour about you that encourages people to let their guard down.

Prerequisite: Cha 11+

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Bluff and Gather Information checks. The first time someone catches you in a Bluff, their attitude towards you doesn't change. They assume you're foolish, ignorant, or otherwise exempt from blame.

Special: This feat may only be selected during character creation.

Inside Joke [General]

You find it easy to break the ice with people who have similar interests and work experiences as you do.

Benefit: You may make a Craft, Knowledge, or Profession skill check to alter the attitude of an NPC who has ranks in that same skill.

Normal: Charisma checks are usually made to change NPC attitudes.

Innuendo [General]

You know how to make sense of coded language and innuendo.

Prerequisite: Bluff skill

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus to Bluff checks to send a secret message in plain conversation and a +4 bonus to Sense Motive checks to discern secret messages.

Jargon [General]

You find it especially easy to communicate with people who have similar interests and work experiences as you do.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Sense Motive checks you make on characters who have at least one rank in a Craft, Knowledge, or Profession skill in which you also have at least one rank. This feat grants no benefit for having more than one skill in common.

Local Color [General]

You have an understanding of local customs and values that people appreciate.

Prerequisite: Ettiquette, Wis 15+

Benefit: You may make a Sense Motive check (DC 20) every day you spend in a new city or port. Once you have succeeded, you gain a +2 bonus to all Diplomacy and Gather Information checks you make in that area. If you leave the location and return later, the bonus still applies. This bonus is lost if you are involved in any major disturbance in the area, such as a crime or a terrible accident.

Masterful Control [General]

You have a master's touch on steering wheels, throttles, and other control surfaces.

Prerequisites: Dex 15+, Improved Initiative, Pilot

skill, Technical Proficiency, Vehicle Dodge

Benefit: Whenever you suffer a vehicular mishap, you may attempt an immediate Pilot check as a free action to regain control of the vehicle before anything can go wrong.

Minimizing Maneuver [General]

You can alter your starship's profile to minimize the exposure of vulnerable areas to attack.

Prerequisites: Dex 15+, Pilot Skill, Sacrificial Roll, Starhip Piloting, Technical Proficiency, Vehicle Dodge

Benefit: When the vehicle you're piloting is the subject of a critical threat, you may make a Pilot check opposed by the attacker's attack roll. If your Pilot check wins this opposed roll, the critical threat is not confirmed.

Sacrificial Roll [General]

You can roll your ship to expose less vulnerable surfaces to attack.

Prerequisite: Pilot Skill, Starship Piloting, Technical Proficiency, Vehicle Dodge

Benefit: Whenever the vessel you're piloting suffers a critical hit, you can make a Pilot check (DC 20) to reroll the hit location and choose between the results.

Superior Attitude [General]

You use other people's ignorance to make you seem superior.

Benefit: First, make an opposed Craft, Knowledge, or Profession check against a subject you wish to intimidate. If you win the check, you gain a +4 bonus to all Intimidate checks against that subject until you finally fail an Intimidate check against them.

Throttle Jockey [General]

You have a masterful control over your vehicle's speed.

Prerequisite: Lead Foot, Pilot skill, Technical Proficiency

Benefit: When piloting a vehicle, you ignore one-half of the current speed penalty when making Pilot checks to accelerate or decelerate.

Wise Flying [General]

You rely on sensory cues, instruments, and your gut to pilot vehicles.

Prerequisite: Wis 13+

Wanted: Spellcaster

Prestigious House Gevise freight cruiser *Market Explorer* seeks spellcasters and experts in the arcane for a three-week mission in the Smuggler's Run. Expertise in spellcraft and matters of arcane sight is ideal. Lodging, transportation, equipment, and meals provided. Applicants must be willing to endure several consecutive days in a wilderness environment. Applicants must sign non-disclosure agreement. Applicants receive no salvage or looter's rights. All materials become Gevise Family property upon mission completion.

Benefit: You use your Wisdom modifier in place of your Dexterity modifier when making Pilot checks.

Zero Records [General]

You have led a cautious existence, carefully avoiding contact with the InfoNet and other media that could record your whereabouts or history.

Benefit: The Research DC to locate any information about your past or your current whereabouts is 30. Gather Information checks centering on you suffer a –2 penalty. Spot checks to recognize you in a crowd or through a disguise suffer a –2 penalty.

Special: This feat may only be taken during character creation.

Spells

This section contains new spells for use in **Dragonstar**. The names and game mechanics of these spells are designated as **Open Game Content.**

ARCANE BRIBE

Enchantment (Charm) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 2
Components: M
Casting Time: 1standard action
Range: Touch
Target: One touched object
Duration: 1 hour/level; see text
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The object touched (which must be Tiny or smaller, typically a coin) is enchanted with a *charm person* spell.

The next person, after the caster, to touch the object becomes the target of the *charm person* spell. Once *arcane bribe* has been cast, however, the spell's duration begins to elapse. The *charm person* effect does not outlast the *arcane bribe* effect. For example, a 6th-level sorcerer delivers an *arcane bribe* with a duration of six hours to a customs inspector on Draconis. The spell was cast five and a half hours ago, so the sorcerer only has thirty minutes to deliver the *bribe* and make use of his new friend.

GLAMOUR

Enchantment (Charm) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 1, Clr 2, Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 round
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels); see text
Area: 20-ft.-radius emanation; see text
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell infuses an area with charm, a fine atmosphere, and an impressive vibe. Bluff, Diplomacy, and Gather Information checks made by the caster or one other specified subject within this area enjoy a +5 enhancement bonus. If the area in which the spell is cast is adorned with fine furnishings (silk drapes, antique chairs, stylish modern lamps), *glamour* magnifies their appeal and grants an additional +2 bonus to Charisma checks to alter a character's attitude.

Material Component: A single object of furniture at the center of the emanation.

GREATER ARCANE BRIBE

Enchantment (Charm) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 3, Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: One touched object
Duration: One day/level
Saving Throw: Will negates; see text
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell is identical to *arcane bribe*, except for the following differences. Any creature touching the target object becomes subject to a *charm person* spell for as long as they possess the object. If the object passes to a new creature, that creature is afforded a Will save to resist the spell. Otherwise, it is affected. Creatures who were once in possession of the target object are subject to the *charm person* spell again if they hold the object again. Successful Will saves prevent the object from having any effect on the successful creature, but do not negate the spell. Creatures get only one Will save against *greater arcane bribe*, made when they first come into contact with the object.

Material Component: The object touched.

Wizard Seeks Charter

Praxilus-based wizard seeks charter vessel with disciplined, responsible crew to transport recently acquired library from Port Vista to Praxilus by way out Outlands Station. Library must arrive in mint condition, unmolested and uninspected. Time is not a factor, but delicacy is. Will pay 10,000 credits in advance, with 20,000 on delivery.

IMPAIR JUDGEMENT

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature and object touched
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

Impair judgement causes the subject to see what he wants to see. The caster must simultaneously touch the target creature and the target object. The creature thereafter wants nothing so much as to possess the object. Affected creatures suffer a –10 insight penalty to skill checks made to purchase the item. Creatures will not give their lives or go against their nature to obtain the item (e.g. a good creature will not kill for it), but they will make regrettable decisions. Ridiculous sums suddenly sound reasonable, awful trades sound fair. The affected creature will gladly spend any credits they have on hand, up to 100 credits per point of the caster's Charisma bonus (minimum +100 credits) to purchase the item. When the spell ends, creatures discover they've paid 300 credits for a one-penny gel-quill.

IMPOSSIBLE PLANT

Conjuration (Summoning)
Level: Drd 3
Components: V, S,
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Summons magical, fruit-bearing plant
Duration: 24 hours; see text
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell summons a Medium extradimensional plant from any of several lush and verdant planes. The *impossible plant* has magical roots that reach across the planes for nourishment elsewhere. The *plant* lives for 24 hours before returning to its home plane, unless it is planted (see blow), in which case it remains indefinately.

An *impossible plant* resembles a flowering ivy, but produces enough highly nutritious fruit and nuts to feed three Medium creatures for one day. It requires a surface to cling to, such as a wall or even a ceiling, but does not need earth or soil. It requires two gallons of water per day. Summoned *impossible plants* do not grow, at least not on this plane.

To keep an *impossible plant* from vanishing at the end of this spell's duration, it must be persuaded to stay with generous and knowledgeable care. A successful Profession (herbalist) check (DC 20) made each day will keep the *plant* on this plane for one more day.

SECRET TONGUE

Divination
Level: Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: Creature named
Duration: 10 min./level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: No

This spell creates a special language between the caster and the target. The words they speak may contain secret messages indecipherable by any means. Ordinary dialogue is heard by all eavesdroppers, but the subjects of this spell say and hear additional, completely different sentences. The subjects of this spell must be able to speak for the spell to be effective; this is not a telepathic effect. Body language and attitude are not changed by this spell, so onlookers may perceive something is amiss if characters discuss trivial subjects with unusual vigor or seriousness.

A *tongues* spell reveals the sound of the secret language, but not the message. Listeners under the effects of a *tongues* spell must succeed at a Sense Motive check (DC 25) to discern anything about a conversation using *secret tongue*.

TRICK QUESTION

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 2, Clr 3
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

Trick question causes target creatures to reveal requested information or facts as they know them. The caster simply asks a question of the target, which the target attempts to answer immediately. Targets are allowed a Will save to resist the compulsion to answer. Failure means the target blurts out the answer despite himself. If the information requested is clearly embarassing or otherwise difficult to share, the target gets a +2 bonus to its saving throw. If the requested information is clearly damning, the target is granted a +4 bonus to its Will save. Questions that catch the target by surprise, are confusing, or don't fit into the conversation grant no bonuses to the Will save. The target doesn't have to appreciate the question or understand its purpose, but must be able to make sense of its language.

VENEER

Transmutation
Level: Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Object touched; see text
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell temporarily changes the physical composition of an object, creating or enhanceing its desireable and valuable qualities. An object worth 100 credits per caster level can be affected. The object becomes gilded, decorated, signed, gold-plated, or otherwise adorned with some precious detail. This raises the object's worth by 30%, before adjustments from Appraise checks. A successful Spellcraft check versus the DC to Appraise the item reveals that the object has been magically tampered with. Another Spellcraft check must be made to identify the work of this particular spell. Failed Appraise checks made on an object affected by *veneer* always mistake the item for being more valuable than it is, by 1d4+1 x 10%.

When this spell ends, the object reverts back to its condition prior to the spell, plus any damage suffered during the spell's duration.

CHAPTER THREE

EQUIPMENT

Introduction

This chapter details equipment, robots, and cargo pods that free-traders and ship captains have found useful in their careers. The game mechanics and names of the individual items in this section are designated as **Open Game Content**. The specific descriptions and background information are designated as closed content.

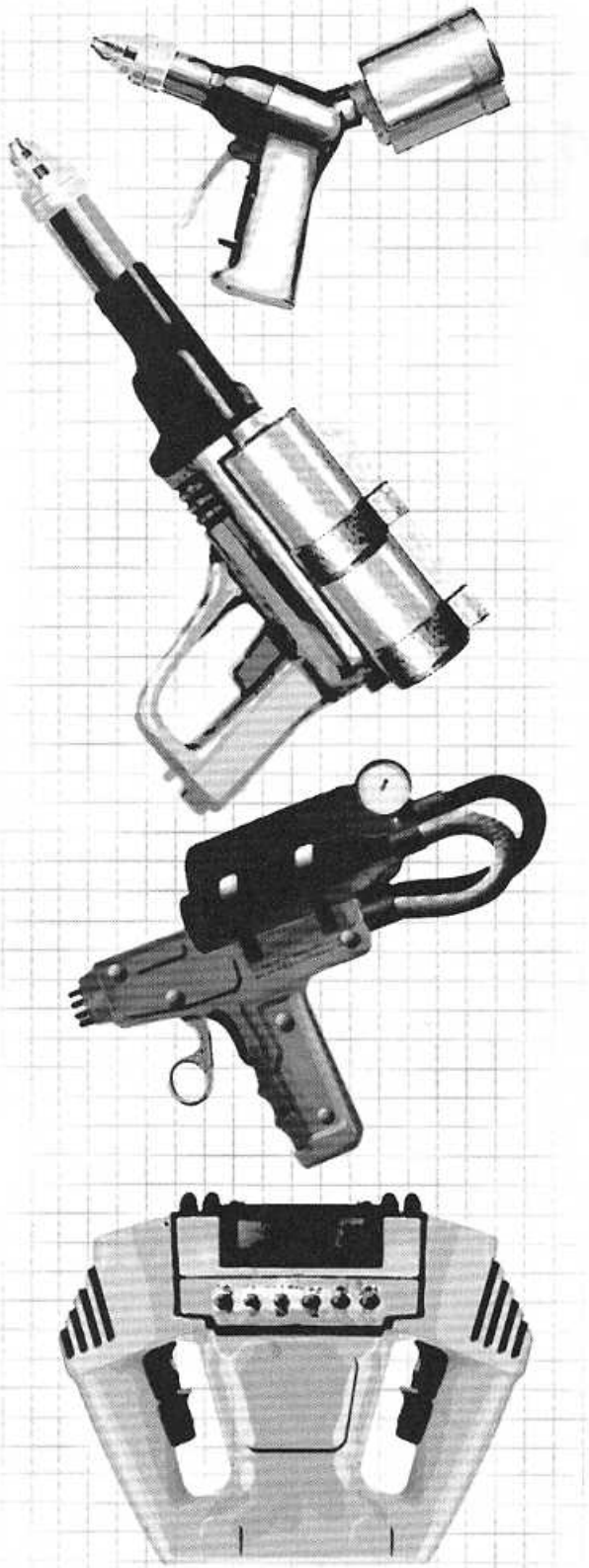
Shipping Equipment

Appraiser: This expensive little scanning computer is marketed for jewelers and other purveyors of fine goods. Most commercial appraisers are designed with cosmetics and style in mind, though this is not always the case. Since a collection of cheaper, less-dedicated equipment can perform many of the same jobs as an appraiser, these are often sold as luxury items to know-nothing laymen. An appraiser is a handheld unit with a large, protruding sensor. The user examines items through the sensor, which simultaneously scans the object. Data and scan results appear as an animated projection in the unit's display screen.

The scanner is linked to a database designed to determine material purity, physical integrity, and comparative quality in a wide variety of objects from gems to electronic components to clothing. An appraiser stores catalogs of data for up to five different styles of craftsmanship, such as gunsmithing or leatherworking. The scanner compares the data collected by the sensor to those items in its database and determines an approximate value by comparison. The database can be kept current by downloading the newest software updates on styles, trends, and pricing from across the Empire.

An appraiser is operated with a Use Device check (DC 10). Essentially, the appraiser makes a trained skill check for the user, with a circumstance bonus of +1 to +10 based on its programming. The user just stands by and waits for a response from the unit. The device gets its bonus to Appraise checks based on the catalogs currently stored in its database. Up to 10 "artificial ranks" of data may be stored for up to five different Craft skills. A jeweler's catalog might be dedicated to Craft (gemcutting), for example, while a tailor's might be divided over Craft (leatherworking) and Craft (weaving). Unfortunately, appraisers cannot judge unique or previously unclassified items at all. When tasked with analyzing such potential treasures, the device returns a reading of "no recognized qualities."

Mass Analyzer: This two-handed scanner uses four independent, low-powered lasers to measure, record, and quantify targeted objects. The scanning process requires the user to examine every possible surface of the target using the analyzer. For small objects, like jewelry, this might require two or three passes with the scanner, turning the target object around and over. For large objects, like vehicles or rooms, this requires the user to move around the object and record a series of three-dimensional images. The analyzer's lasers measure a 30-foot cone from the user for each standard action spent scanning, but may be foiled by miss chances due to concealment (such as smoke). Once this process is completed, the scanner computes the material composition, density, and structure of the target object, extrapolating when necessary, and essentially taking 20 on a Search check of the object. This takes just as long as a thorough search by hand, except no single individual is required to monitor the analyzer. Once its analysis is complete, it chimes. The analyzer also



reveals the hardness, hit points, and construction materials of the target object, if the material is one commonly found in the Empire.

Binding Gun: Intended for use as a packaging device, a binding gun dispenses quick-drying liquid cord of respectable strength. Useful only at short ranges, a binding gun fires four simultaneous streams around any objects in the target area, which is always a five-foot square no more than 30 feet from the gun. This requires a ranged attack roll against AC 5. Objects in the target area are bound by a mesh of synthetic fiber cords (Break DC 22, hardness 3, 1 hp). The drying action of the fibers makes the equivalent of a +10 Use Rope check against the target. Creatures caught in the target area may attempt a Reflex save (DC 15) to reduce the gun's Use Rope check against them by half. Bound creatures move at half speed and may not use their arms or other non-locomotive limbs without an Escape Artist check. Tiny and smaller objects or creatures are unaffected. A binding gun's magazine contains enough liquid cord for four uses. A binding gun is a Small exotic weapon for combat purposes.

Binding Gun, Industrial: This is the large-scale version of the commercial binding gun. About the size of a shotgun, this Large awkward tool (and exotic weapon) targets a 10-foot square no more than 60 feet from the gun. It makes a +15 Use Rope check against objects or creatures in the area. Targets that fail a DC 20 Reflex save are bound by heavy-duty liquid cord (Break DC 30, hardness 5, 2 hp). Medium and smaller creatures are immobilized by these strands. Large and bigger creatures move at half speed, but may not use their arms or other appendages without a successful Escape Artist check opposed by the gun's Use Rope check. One canister of fiber allows for four shots.

Environmental Processor: This portable unit appears something like a large vaporizor with attached tanks of compressed gases. Used to alter passenger compartments or cargo bays for the purposes of exotic shipments or guests, an environmental processor affords a free-trader a great deal of flexibility in his cargo selections. A lot of power is needed to operate one of these devices, though, so they must be connected directly to a ship's power supply. Adjusting the environmental settings requires a Use Device check (DC 15), though most units come pre-programmed with the settings for a particular environment. An environmental processor alters the temperature, humidity, and particle mixture of the area surrounding the unit, out to a radius of 50 feet. The unit attaches magnetically to surfaces, so placing one on a ceiling can generate rain-like effects inside a cargo bay or other chamber. An environmental processor's capabilities reach into the extreme temperature ranges (see "The Environment," DMG), and can even be hazardous

EQUIPMENT

Item	Cost	Range Increment	Weight
Appraiser (with ten ranks)	400 cr	—	1 lb.
Appraiser ranks (each)	25 cr	—	—
Binding gun (commercial)	450 cr	5 ft. (30 ft. max)	8 lb.
Liquid fiber refill	10 cr	—	—
Binding gun (industrial)	650 cr	10 ft. (60 ft. max)	22 lb.
Liquid fiber regill	25 cr	—	—
Mass analyzer	400 cr	—	4 lb.
Packing gun	500 cr	5 ft.	12 lb.
Chemical canister	30 cr	—	2lb.
Robotic lock	100 cr	—	3 lb.

if not used carefully. Smoke and toxic clouds can be emitted, though a processor can only generate a single atmospheric composition at any one time, and only if it is fed the correct ingredient mixture. Temperature settings can be altered independently of the atmospheric mixture and do not require ingredient tanks. The companies that produce atmosphere generators also sell prepackaged environmental ingredients.

Packing Gun: For objects more fragile or oddly shaped than a binding gun can safely manage, shippers use a packing gun. A packing gun is an inelegant unit with a pair of small metal tanks containing liquid chemicals. When these chemicals are mixed in the firing hose, they form a thick foam that immediately solidifies around any objects sprayed. Spraying with the packing gun's hose requires a ranged attack against the target's AC. Objects and creatures sprayed aren't merely bound, they're encased in a solid mass of molded plastic. When used on objects, a packing gun creates an insulating barrier (hardness 5) that protects valuable merchandise. When used on a creature, the foam restricts movement, effectively dealing 1d6 points of temporary Dexterity damage to the target creature on a successful hit. The creature isn't actually harmed, however, and does not need to heal this damage. Instead, the creature must succeed at an Escape Artist check (DC 30) or be cut free of the plastic mass around them to regain their full Dexterity score. Cutting a creature or object free of the packing foam requires slashing or peeling (that is, unarmed) attacks to be made against the foam; these attacks automatically hit willing targets and relieve Dexterity restrictions according to the damage dealt in the attack. A slash from a dagger, for example, restores 1d4 points of Dexterity to the afflicted creature.

Robotic Lock: Although not technically a robot, a robotic lock is a mechanical device with rudimentary programming and simplistic sensory abilities. Robotic locks respond to vocal commands, passwords, or certain requests. The difference between a robotic lock and common electronic locks is that a robot lock can be issued instructions for admittance that require some degree of judgement on the part of the device. A robotic lock can be bypassed with the Open Locks skill (DC 22) or it can be tricked into opening up with a Diplomacy or Bluff check (opposed by the lock's +5 Sense Motive skill). This an out-dated device that sees use today when someone thinks they may want to allow unknown persons to access a container or room at some point in the future.

Robot Models

Due to the costs involved in feeding, paying, and entertaining well-trained crews—and the fact that open crew stations typically outnumber quality personnel—robots see a lot of use even in small-scale shipping operations. A robot's maintenance requirements can be folded into those of a ship, and they don't complain, aspire, desire, or betray like living crewmembers so often do. At the same time, while a ship full of mechanized sailors is very efficient, it is almost always bad for business. Experience has proven that customers prefer to deal with living people and generally behave in a more professional manner when they do. Customers like to hear stories of the traveler's life. Clients become repeat customers so that they can ask questions like "Where have you been since I saw you last?" This is why so many of the private haulers in the galaxy operate with woefully

obsolete robots. Some ships have lockers full of robots that see use only when live hands are unavailable.

Robots serve a variety of purposes aboard private and small commercial starships. Some companies use robotic cooks, while House Gevise fleet captains would never think of such a thing. Robotic medics, janitors, mechanics, translators, handlers, and bookkeepers are the most common, followed far behind by copilots, navigators, protectors, and customer service representatives.

Appraisal Robot

While no flesh and blood merchant would trust a robot to appreciate the true beauty of fine merchandise more than he does, many merchants trust robots more than their business associates. Appraisal robots are a tool of compromise, then, in the world of professional buyers and sellers. Besides, no one can be an expert at everything. An appraisal robot can be counted on to bestow a certain academic authority, like an almanac.

Something like a giant microscope in appearance, appraisal robots are faceless, walking tables piled high with equipment. A broad, flat counter extends from the unit's middle, onto which merchandise is placed. Sensitive plates beneath the surface's cloth lining measure the exact weight of submitted objects. Tiny, delicate hands grip everything from miniscule fibers to heavy sculptures with precisely calibrated pressure. These hands—there are four—attach to the back of the unit through spindly arms with three joints apiece. The unit's "head" is a down-turned scanner array that resembles a desk lamp. A rotating assortment of specialized lenses is attached to one end, an access port for datachips cuts into the other end.

Appraisal Robot Exp2: CR —; Medium Construct; HD 2d10; hp 11; Init –1 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 9; Base Atk: —; Grap —; Atk —; Full Atk —; SQ Construct, low-light vision, ambidexterity; AL N; Fort +0, Ref –1, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 12, Con —, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Class Skills: Appraise, Craft (electronics), Craft (calligraphy), Craft (gemcutting), Craft (painting), Craft (sculpting), Repair, Research, Search, Use Device.

Skills: Appraise +9, Craft (electronics) +6, Craft (gemcutting) +6, Craft (painting) +6, Repair +2, Research +5, Search +6, Use Device +5.

Feats: Skill Focus (Appraise), Technical Proficiency

Upgrades: Enhanced Dexterity, integral toolkit (appraisal), language module (Common), manipulators.

Possessions: None.

Cost: 9,200 cr.

Contract Drone

These robots were also designed in response to distrust between busness partners. Contract drones oversee, record, log, and notarize contract negotiations, business meetings, and any other scenes that could lead to legal action later on. Sometimes they're used as impartial witnesses, in the case of drones operated by the port authority, and in some cases they are asked to translate verbal agreements into actual written contracts.

A contract drone appears as a hovering eye in a wedge-shaped body. They're equipped with efficient and quiet hoverlifts and sophisticated recording equipment. The data their senses perceive can be beamed to a more secure storage device elsewhere through their personal communicator.

By design, contract drones are unable to communicate by any means other than printed documents and legal precedents. A contract drone itself has little or no memory and processes all stimuli it receives through a filter of law. Since the drones are truly neutral constructs, this makes them somewhat difficult to regard as proper possessions, sometimes. Drones flee from illegal activity with a kind instinctual programming. They won't go far, but it's a tell-tale sign that law enforcement agents have learned to look for.

Contract Drone Exp1: CR —; Tiny Construct; HD 1/2d10; hp 2; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk —; Grap —; Atk —; Full Atk —; SQ Construct, low-light vision, ambidexterity; AL N; Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 4, Dex 12, Con —, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Class Skills: Bluff, Hide, Knowledge (history), Knowledge (law), Listen, Research, Search, Sense Motive, Spot, Use Device.

Skills: Bluff +3, Knowledge (law) +7, Listen +4, Research +5, Sense Motive +4, Spot +4, Use Device +5.

Feats: Skill Focus (Knowledge (law)), Technical Proficiency.

Upgrades: Hoverlift, internal datapad, personal communicator, printer, sensory recorder.

Possessions: None.

Cost: 6,050 cr.

Mobile Vault

Precious cargo is most vulnerable during the loading and unloading phases of a journey. Accidents and thefts are more common when cargo passes through living hands than when it's *teleporting* through space or in the diligent grip of a robot. Mobile vaults are built to reduce the risk of theft or damage to valuables.

A mobile vault consists of little more than a sturdy

ROBOT UPGRADES

Upgrade	Cost	XP Cost
Mass analyzer	400 cr	200
Printer	50 cr	25
Secret compartment	100 cr	50
Tow capacity	250 cr	125

walking safe. The surface of a mobile vault is a complex design of deep grooves and thick, iron bars. These disguise door seams while making locking mechanisms difficult to locate. Small sensors along the top of the unit give it the appearance of a hulking brute, but they're programming undermines their presence. A mobile vault reacts to all situations by fleeing towards safety and its proper caretakers. Durable wheels drop down from the main body of the unit to outrun would-be thieves. When there's nowhere to hide, mobile vaults press themselves door-first against walls to further protect their contents.

Cautious and untrusting sorts use mobile vaults when they want to send valuable documents, recordings, or heirlooms on space journeys with unknown starship crews.

Mobile Vault War1: CR —; Huge Construct; HD 8d10 plus 1d8 (War); hp 48; Init –3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft. (wheels 50 ft.); AC 19, touch 6, flat-footed 19; Base Atk —; Grap —; Atk —; Full Atk —; SQ Construct, low-light visions, ambidexterity, DR 10/—; AL N; Fort +4, Ref –3, Will +0; Str 28, Dex 4, Con —, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +1, Sense Motive +4, Spot +1.

Feats: Run, Technical Proficiency.

Upgrades: Integral amazing lock, integral good lock, language module (Common), storage compartment (x2), natural armor, reinforced construction, transform conversion, wheels.

Possessions: None.

Cost: 44,130 cr.

Monitor Robot

The need for cheap but serious robotic security has resulted in a variety of small security robots that fall within the category of so-called "monitors." A monitor is a simple combination of sensors and a gun on a pivoting head. Based on the much larger and more heavily armed military guntower (*Imperial Supply*, page 75), monitors offer the safety and confidence of robotic reliability with enough firepower to dissuade even serious thieves.

Monitors are squat, round emplacements with a helmet-like head of scanning eyes, microphones, and motion sensors. A fat black blaster juts out between two eyes. Mountable on floors, ceilings, and walls and powered either by internal supplies or local feeds, monitors are a cost-effective way to garauntee the security of a cargo bay, landing pad, or airlock. Monitors ship with built-in recognition software that learns to identify friends from foes without constant introductions by the user. At the same time, monitors are programmed with certain suspect actions and an ability to recognize hostile body language, so even if a familiar face draws a weapon in its presence, the unit will respond with force.

Monitor Robot War1: CR 1/2; Small Construct; HD 1d10 plus 1d6 (War); hp 9; Init +3 (Dex); Spd —; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grap +0; Atk/Full Atk +6 (4d8, blaster carbine); SQ Construct, low-light vision, ambidexterity; AL N; Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 16, Con —, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Technical Proficiency, Weapon Focus (blaster carbine)

Upgrades: 360 degree vision, combat programming, enhanced Dexterity, improved audio sensors, improved video sensors, integral laser sight, integral blaster carbine, integral minicell, motion sensor, sessile.

Possessions: None.

Cost: 8,955 cr.

Robot Upgrades

The needs of the commercial transport business have inspired the invention of a few new robot upgrades. Most of these are readily available to any commercial robotics company, and all are common enough in the industrial market.

Mass Analyzer: This built-in scanner suite requires the robot to be either portable or self-propelled so that the mass analyzer can correctly perform its scans.

Printer: Although recording technolgoies and holog-

raphy have made print media unfashionable, certain offices and professions still make use of printers.

Secret Compartment: The storage space within a robot can be hidden at the expense of credits and space. A secret compartment affords half the storage space for twice the price, but requires a Search check (DC 25) to locate. Even the robot may not know it's there.

Tow Capacity: Any robot capable of locomotion can be equipped with a towing rig that allows the robot to drag objects in addition to those it is carrying or otherwise transporting. A robot's towing capacity is based on its Strength score, as it is for creatures (see PHB), but is 25% higher than the value listed, due to this specialized upgrade.

Cargo Containers

Anti-Magic Module: Popular both for the transporting of arcane contraband and for avoiding the attention of magically aided border guards, anti-magic modules have integral items that suppress magical power like an *antimagic field* does. This protects crews and passengers from potentially dangerous magic without impacting the value of the cargo.

Drop Module: A reinforced hull and aerodynamic design make this pod suitable for unaccompanied descent into a planet's atmosphere. When loosed from a cargo ship, the pilot makes a Pilot check to set the module's trajectory to the planet. Drop modules must be shuttled back into orbit to be used again.

Exceptional Gravity Module: Any gravitational field between 0g and 4g can be managed by the magical and technological equipment aboard these modules. A layer of magically treated mithral is included in the skin of an EG module to keep out the overriding enchantment of a *starcaster*'s antigravity standard.

Extradimensional Module: These incredible hybrids of magic and science are the most advanced devices ever granted to the typically mundane shipping business. They're difficult to create and largely misunderstood. An extradimensional module (XDM) uses a huge volume of magical threads to define the boundaries of a self-contained demiplane within the pod. The effect is similar to that of a *bag of holding*, but is much less efficient. Only half of an XDM's cargo space counts against a starship's capacity. The primary limitation to the benefits of an XDM is the size of the pod's door. Because the magical space inside an XDM can only be entered through a single hatch, they end up looking like squished cargo modules; one face must be large enough to admit cargo drones and forklifts.

Hostile Environment Module: So-called hostile environment modules (HEMs) may actually contain perfectly habitable environments, but they are designed to contain and withstand extreme internal atmospheric conditions. An HEM is an airtight habitat commonly used to transport alien flora, fauna, or produce.

Independent Module: An independent module has its own engine systems, sensor suites, and robotic operations systems, enabling it to be "fired" from a cargo ship towards a destination within 125,000 miles. Indepedent modules have orbital abilities like a satellite module and reentry capabilities like a drop module.

Passenger Module: Used mostly for emergency purposes, a passenger module is little more than a cargo pod with built-in bunks, hooks for hammocks, rudimentary toilets and showers. These accomodations are worth about half of a standard passenger's berth on a freighter, or about 50 cr per day.

Powered Module: Most external cargo modules are fed power by the shuttling ship's generators and onboard systems, but not this pod. Powered modules are used when the client has agreed to cover energy costs for her cargo, when the shipment has some unusual power need, or when the customer doesn't want the

Container	Cost	Minimum Size
Anti-magic module	1 cr per pound +132,000 cr	—
Drop module	1.2 cr per pound + 70,000 cr	50 tons
Exceptional gravity module	2 cr per pound	100 tons
Extradimensional module	3 cr per pound	200 (100) tons
Hostile environment module	1.2 cr per pound + 5,000 cr	50 tons
Independent module	1 cr per pound + 160,000 cr	100 tons
Passenger module	1.3 cr per pound + 500 cr per passenger	50tons
Powered module	1.2 cr per pound + 25,000 cr	25 tons
Satellite module	1 cr per pound + 45,000 cr	50 tons
Warded module	1 cr per pound + 70,000 cr	—

crew to go meddling with the shipment for any reason. A powered module is equipped with an independent transmitter and receiver.

Satellite Module: Used for rapid pick-ups and deliveries, a satellite module is equipped with computerized sensors and thrusters that automatically put the pod into an orbital position around a planet or moon when it is detached from the cargo ship.

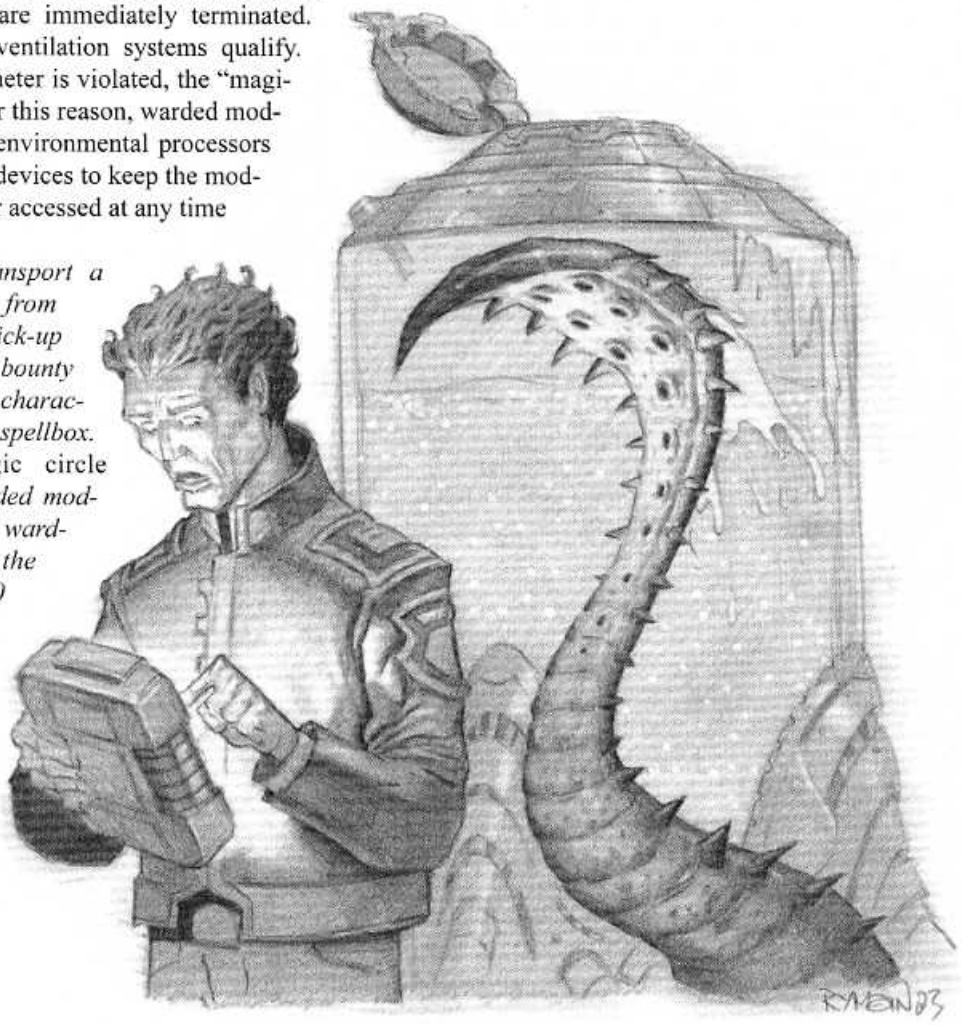
Warded Module: When arcane, divine, or other supernaturally sensitive objects or creatures need to be moved, a warded module (or "spellbox") is usually purchased for the job. Any cargo pod can be turned into a spellbox, but most spellboxes are specially designed with evil prisoners or profane contraband in mind. Spellboxes extend the durations of abjuration spells into a period of days, rather than minutes or hours. The module's hull becomes the area of the spell. So long as an abjuration spell is in place, any of the following spells may take advantage of the module's longer duration or larger area when cast before the module is sealed: *consecrate, daylight, desecrate, hallow, silence, unhallow.*

If a warded module's hull is ever pierced, all magical effects centering on it are immediately terminated. Even open hatches or ventilation systems qualify. Once the module's perimeter is violated, the "magical circuit" collapses. For this reason, warded modules sometimes require environmental processors and other self-sufficient devices to keep the module from being opened or accessed at any time during the journey.

For example: To transport a fugitive spellcaster from Almer to Persilom for pick-up by the ISPD, the divine bounty hunter chartering the characters' freighter rents a spellbox. First, she casts magic circle against evil *on the warded module's enchanted hull. The warded module extends the spell's duration from 10 minutes per level to one day per level. Then she casts* silence *on the module, to keep the spellcaster from casting any spells from inside. That spell's area is expanded to the whole module and it's duration extended to one day per level of the spellcaster. Unfortunately, during the ship's exit manuevers from Almer Station, a tiny bit of debris punctures the module's hull, ruining all of the spell effects. The crew doesn't find out until the evil sorcerer makes his escape attempt.*

Special Shipment

Endangered marine life needs freighter crew with animal handling experience to transport sealed tanks to Outlands planet for re-habitation. Journey is 61 light years. Animals will require feeding and monitoring. Biological research habitat on the destination planet will handle the unloading of the cargo. Non-disclosure contracts must be signed, as animals are being moved to avoid poachers. Communications silence requested. Please respond to this signal to apply.



CHAPTER SIX

VEHICLES

Introduction

This section presents new vehicles and vehicle-related rules. While this chapter was designed primarily with starships in mind, the rules here governing maintenance, repairs, and customizeable cargo space can be applied to planetary vehicles as well.

This chapter's game mechanics, and game rules derived from the d20 System Reference Document, are designated as **Open Game Content**.

Interstellar Freighters

A tremendous variety of vehicles are in motion between the planets of the galaxy at any one moment. This section presents a sampling of different styles and designs for use in any **Dragonstar** campaign. Every one of these craft (and thousands of others not covered here) can be found somewhere in the Smuggler's Run.

Ground Vehicles

The Long Road's circular course across the 10 throne worlds is, for some, a slim chance at financial success lined on both sides with concrete barriers, patrolled fences, and laser-sighted security scanners. The stakes are generally lower here, for the independent trader, than they are blinking across the galaxy in a starship. On the one hand, that makes the lifestyle safer. On the other hand, that makes the likelihood of stumbling onto a retirement-inspiring cargo almost nil. At least, on the Long Road, you can see all the other hopeful freight drivers stuck in traffic right next to you, so you know where you stand. Are you shuttling chickens in your utility van, or are you lugging a fortune in state-of-the-art electronics in your Nomad road cruiser?

NOMAD ROAD CRUISER

Built with the Long Road in mind, the Nomad is a heavy-duty, expandable rig. A squat, durable cab houses the driver and up to six passengers in a relatively comfortable pair of couch-like seats. A sophisticated array of sensor inputs runs the length of the truck's body, allowing the driver to maneuver with confidence. Military-grade, dash-mounted monitors offer access to the sensor data, cargo manifest software, and communications control. Sleeping compartments for three allow for all-hours driving in shifts.

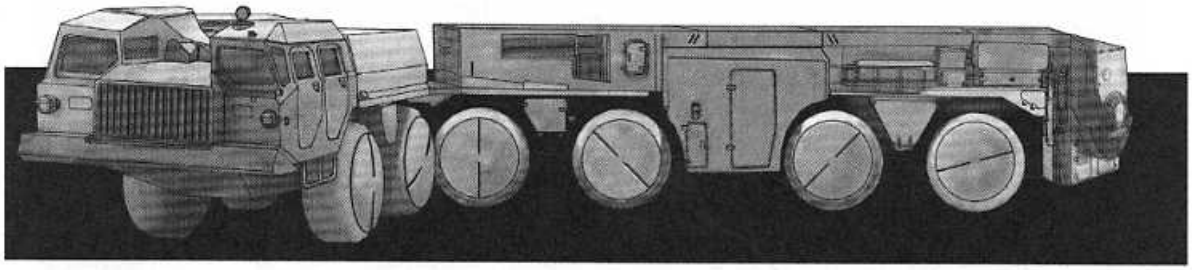
The Nomad offers better-than-average top speed and engine performance for its class. It's range allows for multiple pick-ups and deliveries and several circuits on the Long Road before refueling. It's towing capacity is considerable. What sets the Nomad apart from other freight-trucks, however, is its modular design. As many as five trailers can be attached in series behind the Nomad or mounted on its sturdy chassis. In the few years since the nomad was first sold, it has been put into service on countless Imperial worlds and has been instrumental in the loading and unloading of starships on frontier planets.

Nomad Road Cruiser: Gargantuan Vehicle; hp 100; Top Spd 16; Acc 3; Dec 4; Hand –4; Sensors +2; Stealth 2; AC 15 (–4 size, –5 Dex, +8 natural, +6 armor); SQ vehicle, hardness 20; Fuel 400.

Stations: Pilot 1, Passengers 6.

Cargo: 500,000 lb. max; 2,000 lb. hold

Cost: 538,000 cr.



Starships

The variety of different starships designed to meet the needs of galactic shipping and trading is overwhelming. For every basic model that has come out of a shipyard, there are dozens—sometimes hundreds—of assorted modifications, refits, customizations, and alterations to be found at every shipping hub and refueling station. Some vessels are favored for their flexibility, others for their durability. Some models are the subject of bard's songs and loving jokes, others are the source of ghost stories and tales of woe. This freighter captain only travels in those cavernous dwarf-made hulks that are mazes of internal cargo bays, but that cargo pilot swears she'll never put a pound of freight into a built-in hold again.

No simple system can identify the right ship for a given outfit or run. No single starship offers the tools to solve or avoid every problem. A few of the different ships commonly found in the Smuggler's Run are presented here, but there are thousands of others out there. Use these ships as the basis for new customizations and variations, or stock them with a crew and fly them as they are.

MODIFICATIONS

For the most part, these ships are presented with baseline stats, as if they were new ships just purchased. Of course, many (maybe even most) freighter captains do mount weapons or special defenses of some sort on their vessels, despite the Imperial laws to the contrary. Freighters, known for being lunky and slow in flight, see a lot of money spent to improve handling characteristics. The big shipping firms, merchant houses, and corporations don't put a lot of emphasis on speedy starships, so small-time crews often do, just to find a lucrative niche. Most freighters aren't designed to be fast, though.

Young, hot-shot captains are always spending money on armor, and the old-timers laugh about it over drinks. A freighter is seldom fast enough to outrun pirates, and a smuggling outfit will never have enough money to outspend the Imperial munitions budget for a single patrol boat. Better to reinforce the ship's structural supports and integral frame (by purchasing more hit points), the old wisdom goes. A ship that can get pounded long enough to *teleport* away has at least gotten away.

The real goal of a freighter captain, though, should be to avoid weapons fire altogether. Smugglers especially will want to start saving up for improved stealth measures for their ship. A ship that isn't detected, isn't harassed.

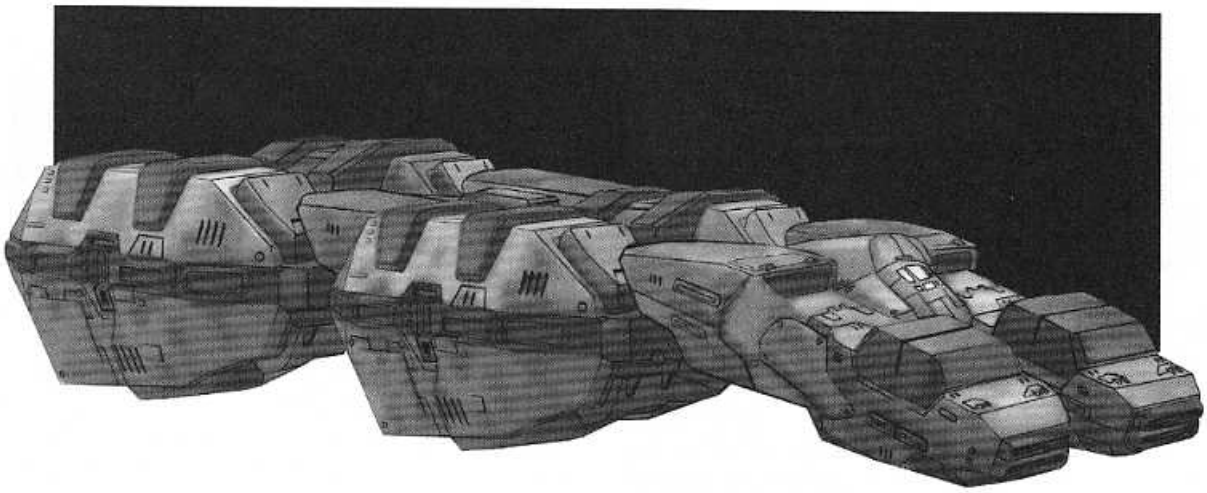
Whatever wisdom you choose to follow, the development process for an interstellar transport ship never ends. Systems get upgraded, added on, destroyed, replaced, and so forth forever. Each of these ships was built using the vehicle design rules from the **Dragonstar** equipment book, *Imperial Supply*. Use those same rules to modify these ships for your campaigns. Once a ship has entered play, the crew will need to find a shipyard or major repair facility capable of performing the modifications. In the Smuggler's Run, there are three such facilities, each with different capabilities.

OX30-SERIES DOMESTIC FREIGHTER

The company that manufactured the OX30 went out of business almost a century ago, but this is still among the most common starships. Everywhere in the galaxy, from the clogged orbits of the central planets to the silent reaches of the Outlands, there are OX30s in service. The common joke is that Oxfield Engine Corp went out of business because no one who bought a so-called "star-ox" ever needed to buy another ship ever again.

For its size, the OX30 is expensive. In practice, it's worth it. Despite its modest (some say poor) engine performance, this ship has remarkable towing and freight capabilities. A single fusion engine drives the ship and its systems, resulting in lousy acceleration, poor deceleration, and a meager maximum speed. The engine runs the length of the ship's keel, beneath the cargo module mountings, and ends in a large thruster mouth lined with maneuvering vents. Thus, the OX30 is somewhat nimble for its gerth. It's also famously tough, built with frame supports intended for a ship twice its size.

Inside, the OX30 consists of three basic areas: a centrally located operations space and two flanking series of compartments featuring passenger berths, crew bunks, a kitchen, and a recreational area/sickbay. The



operations area is made up of, from fore to aft, a short-ceilinged cockpit, a cramped chart room (with an astronav interface), the *starcaster* cradle chamber, and the fusion engine room. A narrow corridor allows access to cargo containers only through human-sized hatches.

It's unusual to find unused OX30s available for sale, though not unheard of. Supposedly, 100 brand-new units are hanging in orbit over the planet where the Oxfield Corporation originated, ready to be sold. Regardless, the OX30 is renowned for its ready-to-find parts. Parts for the OX30 are available at 50% of standard costs, and every junkyard in the Empire is teeming with replacement bits. Any character looking for parts for an OX30 enjoys a +4 bonus to related Research and Search checks.

OX30 Freighter: Colossal Vehicle; hp 300; Top Spd 12; Acc 1; Dec 2; Hand –2; Sensors +4; Stealth 1; AC 3 (–8 size, –5 Dex, +6 natural); SQ vehicle, hardness 30; Fuel 300,000/3.

Stations: Pilot 1, Sensor 1, Passengers 18.
Cargo: 1,500 tons (pods).
Cost: 5,219,850 cr.

Known Uses

OX30s see a lot of use as tugs for larger ships. Among illicit crews, this is sometimes used to dispose of barren starship hulks after they've been stripped down; the empty hull is dragged on a course towards a star or other heavy gravity well and set loose. It's also becoming quite common to find OX30s tugging portable robot refineries and other self-contained, massive machine units.

In 5038 IE, there was a rash of clever starship thefts across the galaxy, perpetrated by a trio of OX30s. The crews secretly boarded starships in repair facilities outside planetary orbit, jammed communications, and tugged the ships outside of the local gravity well. During the trip, the crew brought aboard a spare *starcaster* rig and prepared the ship for a *teleport* into deep space, whether it was designed for it or not.

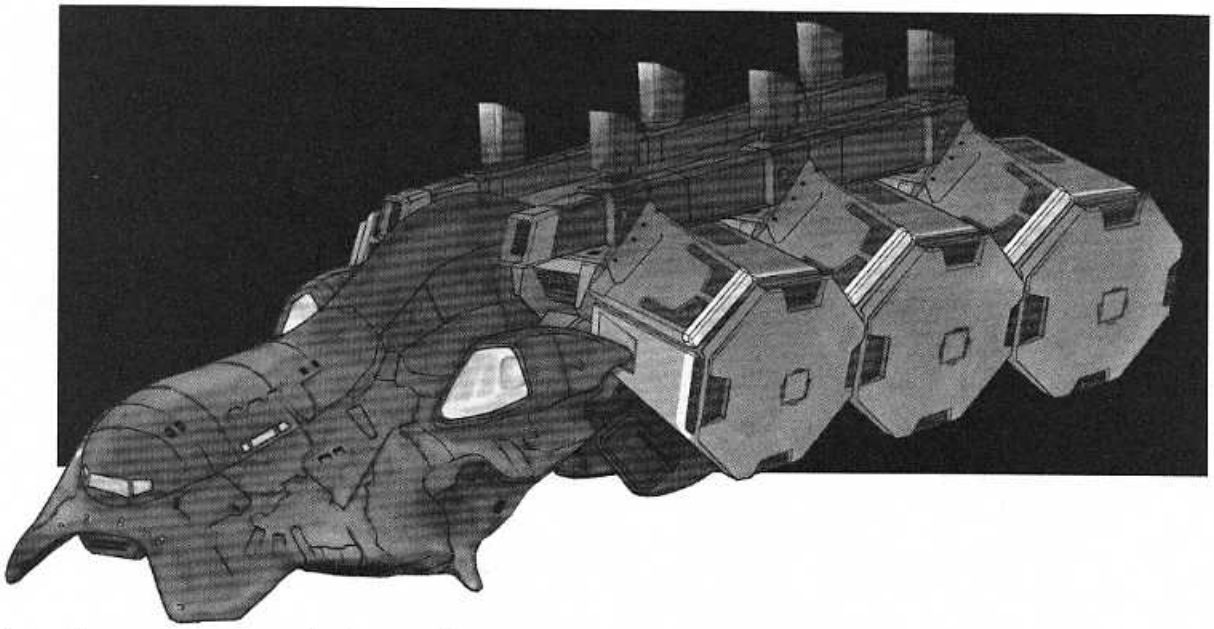
Although it serves little use in an atmosphere, the OX30 is capable of surface deliveries and pick-ups.

KRELLIX HAULER

These compact vessels are favored by smugglers and avoided by legitimate cargo pilots. Ownership of a Krellix is seen as an admission of guilt in some jurisdictions, but only when the ship is seen at all. Constructed in small numbers by the lizard folk of Lith, in the Domain of Handor, the Krellix is a naturally stealthy vessel. Its outer surface is a made up of a green-black energy-dissipating foil that reflects very little information for sensors to work with. Trained sensor operators are sometimes alerted, in fact, by the strange dip in sensor readings when a Krellix passes through busy areas. Against a background of deep space, the ship is almost undetectable.

Unfortunately, this is the only major advantage to the vessel's design. Crews who've served on Krellix haulers report that it absorbs energy from inside the ship, too. Crew members complain of eerily cold, even drafty, conditions aboard ship. That outer skin is somewhat tough, but successful attacks are especially disastrous. Once a puncture or tear has been made in the hull, the ship almost begins to unravel. Its structural frame is unfit for a ship of its weight. Damaged Krellix haulers often result in dead crews, because the ship's natural stealth features cannot be deactivated; rescue ships might pass right by.

On board, the Krellix has a uniformly rounded design, with sloped walls, narrow ceilings, and wide floors. Round, split hatches are the rule, with windows only in operational areas of the ship. The cockpit places the



pilot and sensor operator at the front, with two spare positions available for weapon interfaces. The astronav system is housed in the cockpit, too, with the *starcaster* in an odd glassed-in nest below. Passengers and cargo are kept in the rear, with engine rooms along the outer hull. Although the Krellix only carries external cargo pods, full-size access doors lead off a corridor and airlock in the back of the ship.

Despite its shortcomings, this vessel has held a loyal following for many years. A good number of smuggler captains swear by their Krellix and have operated for years without mishap or disaster. Crews in search of a subtle, nimble ship might be willing to accept the Krellix's limited cargo capacity, fragile body, and modest operational range.

Krellix Hauler: Colossal Vehicle; hp 150; Top Spd 15; Acc 3; Dec 4; Hand +2; Sensors +5; Stealth 20; AC 15 (–8 size, –5 Dex, +18 natural); SQ vehicle, hardness 30; Fuel 200,000/3.

Stations: Pilot 1, Sensor 1, Passengers 10.

Cargo: 300 tons (pods).

Cost: 3,204,850 cr.

Known Uses

Since Krellix captains are rarely concerned with the law, weapons are commonplace on this model. Although it rarely works twice, the Krellix's powerful deceleration system (stemming from its forward-facing thrusters) allows it to slow down beneath pursuing ships and open up with forward-mounted weapons. More often, though, Krellix captains use that unusually powerful deceleration rating to move through patrolled gravity wells as quickly as possible after a *teleport*; the pilot rushes to the edge of a planet's atmosphere and then reduces speed during descent to the surface.

LONGSHIP-CLASS FREIGHTER

This is one of the most popular commercial freighters among free traders in the Outlands. Longships are versatile, reliable, and proven. In the few years since it was first produced, the Longship-class has replaced at least a dozen other ships as the standard vessel in shipping fleets throughout the companies of the aristocorps.

Longships utilize a mix of internal cargo bays and external cargo pods to deal with a wide variety of shipping needs. The class has a reputation for being easy to operate and pleasant to travel aboard. Passengers willing to intermingle with the crew find comfortable bunk spaces and spacious recreational room. Ship systems are simple and easy to upgrade; every component was designed to be replaced and augmented.

Longship Freighter: Colossal II Vehicle; hp 300; Top Spd 10; Acc 2; Dec 2; Hand –2; Sensors +4; Stealth 1; AC 4 (–16 size, –5 Dex, +15 natural); SQ vehicle, hardness 40; Fuel 300,000/3.

Stations: Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Crew 15, Passenger 20.

Cargo: 1,500 tons (max); 200 tons (hold).

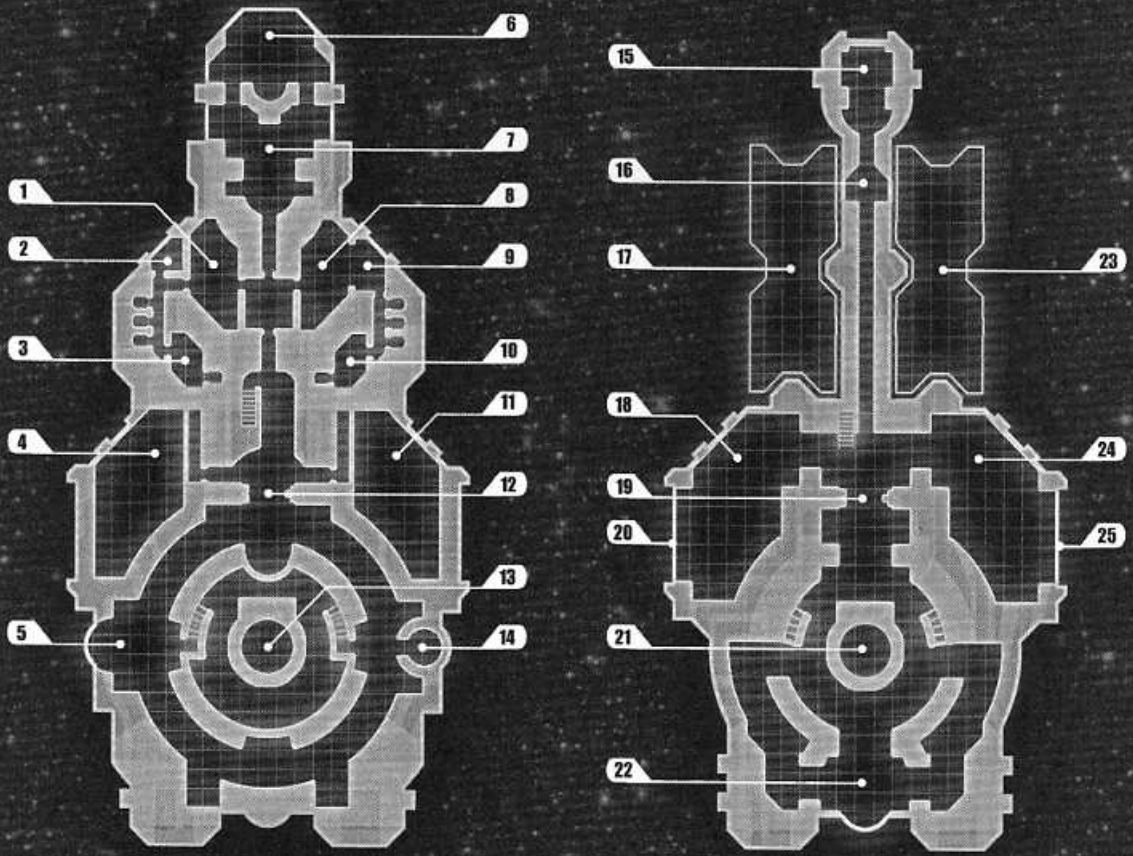
Cost: 4,929,850 cr.

Known Uses

Longships are a good choice for small crews that want to remain independent. Unlike some other vessels, the

LONGSHIP-CLASS MEDIUM HAULER

1 Square = 5 Feet

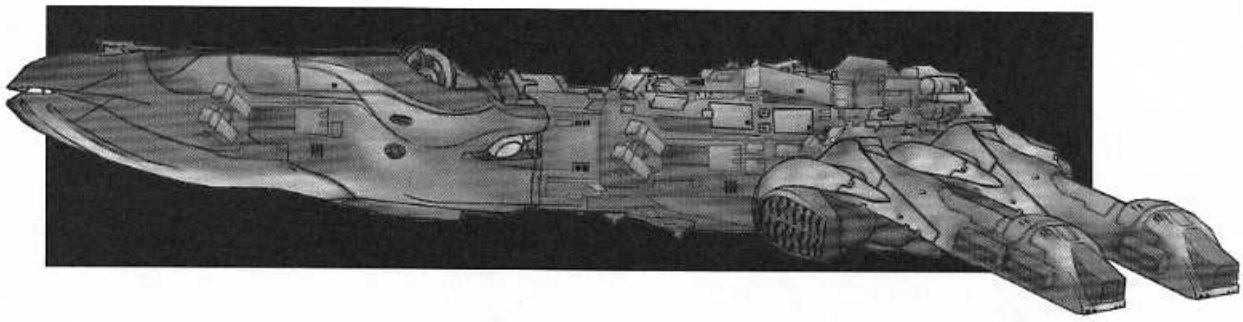


"A" DECK FEATURES

1. Crew's Recreation Area
2. Sickbay
3. Crew's Quarters
4. Port Cargo Bay
5. Engineer's Workstation
6. Bridge
7. Chart Room
8. Mess Hall & Kitchen
9. Captain's Lounge
10. Captain's Quarters
11. Starboard Cargo Bay
12. Emergency Bulkhead
13. Starcaster
14. Escape Pod

"B" DECK FEATURES

15. Airlock
16. Cargo Pod Access
17. Port Cargo Pod
18. Port Cargo Pod
19. Emergency Bulkhead
20. Port Cargo Bay Door
21. Starcaster
22. Engine Room
23. Starboard Cargo Pod
24. Starboard Cargo Bay
25. Starboard Cargo Bay Door



Longship is an easy to place to call home. Small-time outfits can purchase the standard model Longship at yards throughout the galaxy, and sell the external cargo containers back right there on the spot (see Cargo Space, below) in many cases cutting 2 million credits off the purchase price. It's less comonly known that the Longship has been specifically designed with excellent mounting points for weapons; the designers knew what their customers want in a starship. It costs 5% less to mount weapons aboard a Longship if only Gargantuan or smaller weapons are used.

IRON DRAGON-CLASS FREIGHTER

In the same family as the Longship, but from a different manufacturer, the Iron Dragon is an increasingly popular ship with well-funded smugglers and legal traders who don't like to put down roots. Iron Dragons offer a great deal of cargo capacity using only external containers. Inside are the more comfortable accomodations modern crews are coming to expect.

What sets the Iron Dragon apart from the other ships in the field is its detachable starship rover, called an Iron Hatchling. The Hatchling houses the essential starship operations equipment for the vessel, from the cockpit and the crew bunks to the *starcaster* and its astronav. When attached to the Dragon, both ships use the Hatchling's sensors score and the Dragon's handling and engine characteristics.

If attacked, each vessel takes damage independently from the other, so that the Hatchling may escape even if the Dragon is destroyed. The Hatchling's engines were specifically designed for rapid acceleration.

On board, the Iron Dragon is somewhat curiously designed. The vessel's sickbay is set apart from the rest of the ship by the length of the cargo access corridor. The design document says this puts patients near the airlock for emergency access by rescue ships, but rumors abound that the sickbay was an afterthought, added to compete with the Longship class's celebrated interiors.

Iron Dragon Freighter: Colossal III Vehicle; hp 400; Top Spd 10; Acc 3; Dec 3; Hand –8; Sensors +2; Stealth 6; AC 3 (–32 size, –5 Dex, +20 natural, +10 armor); SQ vehicle, hardness 50; Fuel 500,000/5*.

Stations: Pilot 1, Crew 25, Passengers 5.

Cargo: 2,300 tons (pods).

Cost: 5,569,850 cr., 7,860,700 cr. (with rover)

Iron Hatchling Rover: Colossal Vehicle; hp 200; Top Spd 20; Acc 3; Dec 1; Hand +0; Sensors +5; Stealth 10; AC 3 (–8 size, –5 Dex, +6 natural); SQ vehicle, hardness 30; Fuel 200,000/3.

Stations: Pilot 1, Sensor 1, Passengers 5.

Cargo: 5 tons (hold)

Cost: 2,290,850 cr., 7,860,700 cr. (with body)

Known Uses

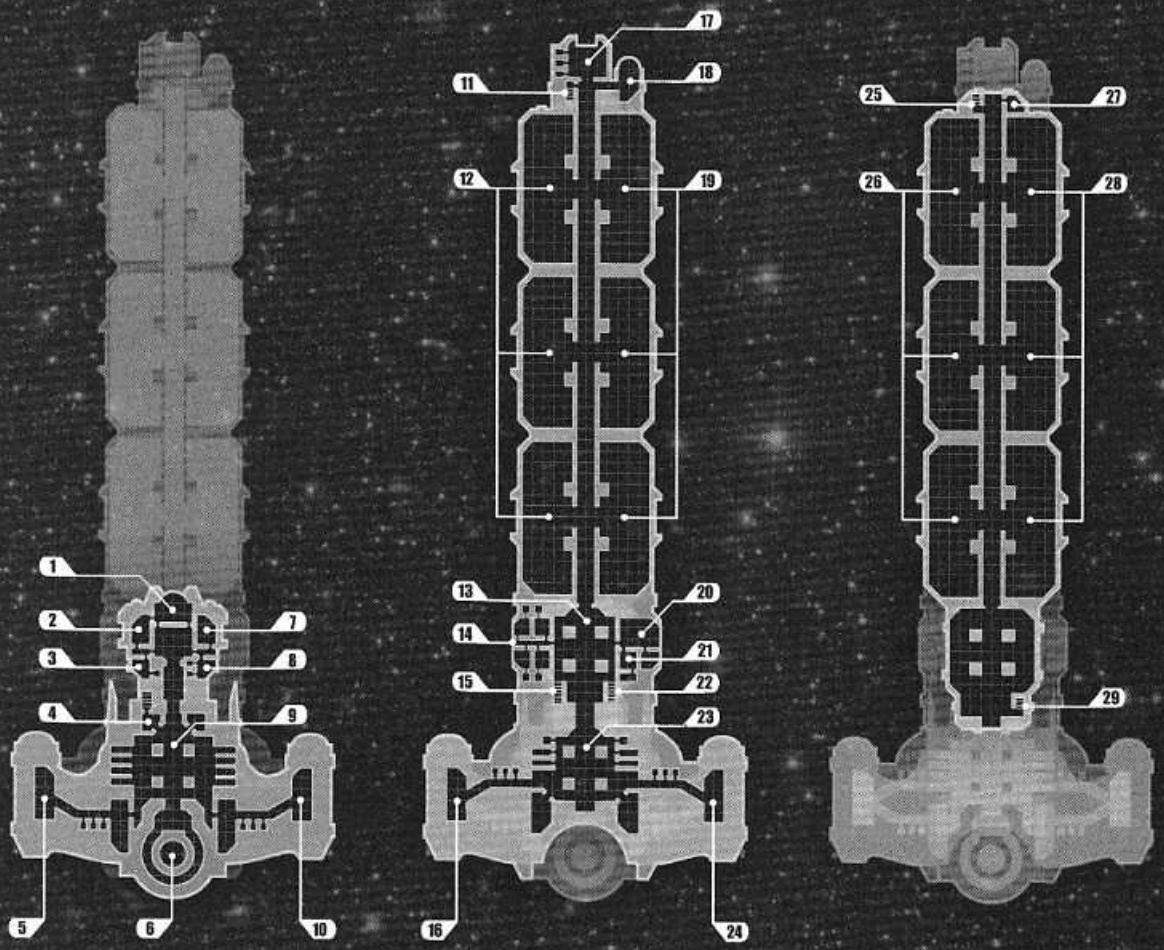
Smugglers like the Iron Dragon for its Hatchling's use as a scout ship. Contraband can be left in the dead of space where no one will find it while the crew prowls ahead to the next port and has a look at the presence of law enforcement or customs forces. Unfortunately, the Hatchling has also altered the traditional methods of pirates who prey on Iron Dragons. Typically it's not in a pirate's best interests to deal severe damage to a freighter because the cargo might be lost. By targeting the Hatchling first, however, marauders can chop of the Dragon's head and then make off with its hoard.

BLUEBACK CONSUMER TRANSPORTER

The Blueback is among the largest civilian vehicles hauling freight in the known galaxy, when they're used for that. The original Bluebacks were based on a pair of mysterious starships found adrift in the distant Olung system at the outer edge of the domain of Noros. The origins of those ships were never determined, as most of their internal components had been stripped away. The

IRON DRAGON-CLASS TRANSPORT

1 Square = 5 Feet



"A" DECK FEATURES

1. Main Bridge
2. Chart Room
3. Captain's Quarters
4. Airlock & Gangway (Stairs Down to "B" Deck)
5. Engine Room 1
6. Starcaster
7. Officers' Mess
8. Officer's Quarters
9. Main Engineering
10. Engine Room 2

NOTE: "A" Deck may disengage from the main body of the ship and function independently.

"B" DECK FEATURES

11. Stairs Down to "C" Deck
12. Cargo Bays 1, 2 & 3
13. Crew Lounge
14. Crew Quarters
15. Stairs Up to "A" Deck
16. Engine Room 3
17. Airlock
18. Auxiliary Bridge
19. Cargo Bays 4, 5, & 6
20. Crew's Mess
21. Kitchen
22. Stairs Down to "C" Deck
23. Auxiliary Engineering
24. Engine Room 4

"C" DECK FEATURES

25. Stairs Up to "B" Deck
26. Cargo Bays 7, 8, & 9
27. Sick Bay
28. Cargo Bays 10, 11 & 12
29. Stairs Up to "B" Deck

outer hull design, however, was the direct inspiration for the Blueback Consumer Transport.

Blueback's have an enormous volume of interior space, but it is only sometimes used for cargo. The sloped from of a Blueback opens up like a huge mouth to accept cargo containers and smaller ships for *teleports* across the galaxy. Within this mouth is a vast empty space, above and behind which are the ship's habitable compartments. Airlocks, moutning brackets, and docking claws line the inside of the Blueback's "belly," allowing the crews of ferried starships to visit the recreational and refreshment facilities of the ship.

Inside, a Blueback is streamlined and handsome, built from blue-gray alloys and attractive modern fixtures. Passenger compartments are spacious and comfortable, though most look out into the vehicle's interior space, which can sometimes be disorienting for novice travelers. Bluebacks are crewed by a combination of robot servants and pleasant, corporate employees. Only the largest commercial fleets can afford even a single Blueback, and it's been reported that less than 10 of these ships exist throughout the Dragon Empire.

The Imperial Legions do not approve of the Blueback design, but the Emperor has kept them from restricting the movement of the vessels. Bluebacks rival some of the greatest Imperial ships in several key characteristics, such as size and handling. Bluebacks also feature a forward-facing torpedo bay in their standard design, which is technically illegal. The manufacturers claim it is intended to carry low-yield explosives for the purpose of displacing stellar obstacles such as asteroids. That may even be true, but the Legions don't like it. Whenever a Blueback enters an Imperial-occupied system, the local military presence goes on guard.

Blueback Transport: Colossal IV Vehicle; hp 600; Top Spd 12; Acc 3; Dec 3; Hand –5; Sensors +8; Stealth 16; AC 17 (–64 size, –5 Dex, +60 natural, +16 armor); SQ vehicle, hardness 60; Fuel 400,000/10.

Stations: Pilot 1, Crew 100, Passengers 400.
Cargo: 40,000 tons
Cost: 83,259,900 cr.
Weapon: Torpedo bay; Fire arc: front; Damage: 6d10x5

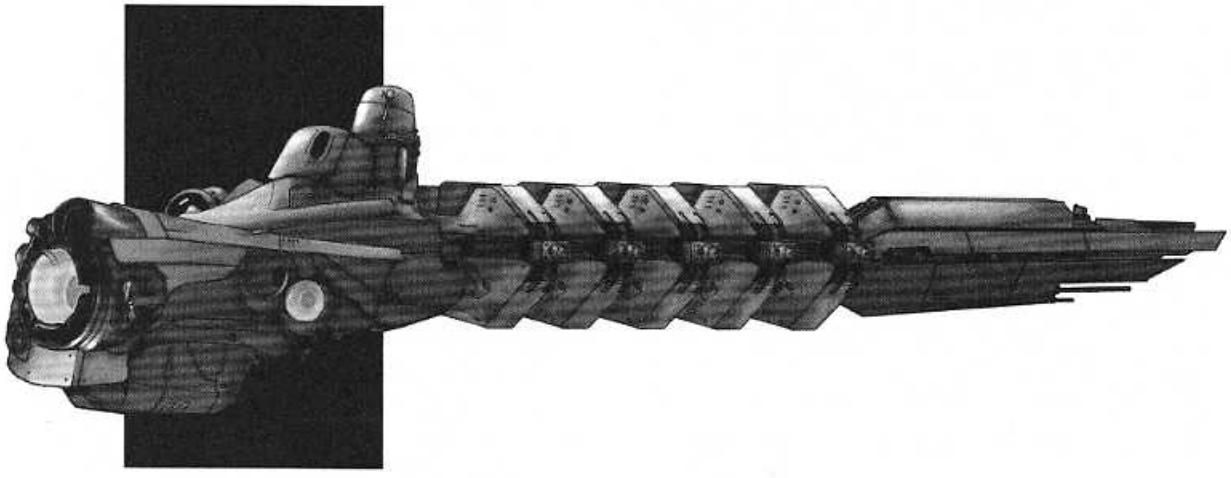
Known Uses

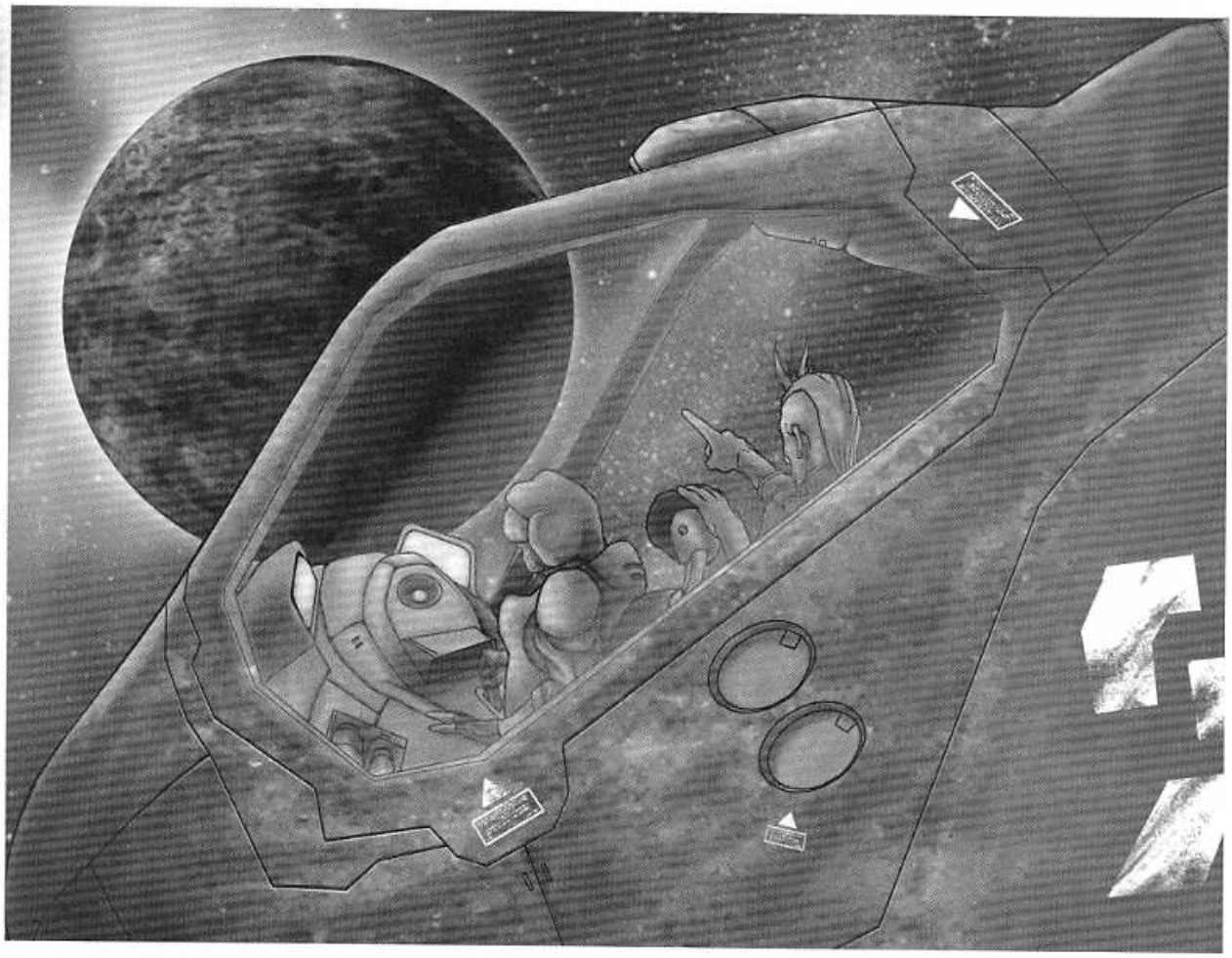
Bluebacks carry starships without the means to *teleport* themselves to other systems. Some Blueback crews haul freight directly, as well, but that's not why a company shells out the money for this presitgious and novel design. Of course it was only a matter of time until the Imperial Legions were proven correct, and they have been. Reports of an unfinished Blueback transport capturing ships in the Outlands are filtering in to the Empire. No one's sure where the ship came from, if it was manufactured, or if it's of the same origin as the first, inspirational starships.

LANCER-CLASS ELITE TRANSPORT

When the Dragon Empire finally puts its full weight into the Smuggler's Run, it will be with Lancer-class elite transports. These severe vessels are the newest in the Empire's commercial (that is, non-military) fleets and sport many features that make them attractive to travelers, colonists, and noble tourists.

Designed with one eye on vessels like the Longship-class and the Iron Dragon, Lancers are built for speed first and actual tonnage second. By Imperial reckoning, it's fine for a long line of ships to be required to carry the taxes and treasures out of new markets if it gets some of that fresh wealth into the Emperor's hands right away. Plus, faster ships can run down the competition, which speaks to the other half of the Lancer's design mandate: to shepherd from within the herd, so to speak. Every tenth Lancer or so is actually crewed with cus-





toms inspectors and surveillance operatives tasked with monitoring spacer traffic in the Run.

Lancers are all carbon-black metal, brushed steel, and fine leather. Richly appointed officer and guest accomodations are intended to host traveling nobility and meetings with the indigenous former leaders of newly conquered holdings. Control surfaces come from the Empire's military surplus warehouses and internal security is tight. Powerful, efficient fusion engines break up the stark lines of the ship's outer hull. Two-headed laser batteries mounted in dorsal and ventral turrets dissuade pirate attacks and bring down illegal salvage operations. In the rounded conning tower, sensitive sensor palettes watch for suspicious flight plans or skulking starships.

Lancer Transport: Colossal II Vehicle; hp 300; Top Spd 20; Acc 4; Dec 4; Hand –4; Sensors +8; Stealth 18; AC 16 (–16 size, –5 Dex, +12 natural, +15 armor); SQ vehicle, hardness 40; Fuel 500,000/4.

Stations: Pilot 1, Crew 70, Passengers 130.

Cargo: 1,050 tons; 50 ton hold.

Cost: 5,074,850 cr.

Weapon: 2 twin laser cannons (batteries); Fire arc: turret; Attack bonus: +5 (targeting computer); Damage: 6d10x2; Range: 10.

Known Uses

Although already serving multiple roles as freighters, inspectors, dignitary ships, and scouts, Lancers are also believed to be carrying ISPD spies into the Run. In a few systems in Asamet, Lancers have been retrofitted for use as gunships. They perform reasonably well in this capacity so long as hostile forces are not expecting them. Lancers have excellent stealth capabilities for vessels of their size, but when outgunned they have little resources to rely on other than their speed. That's the real danger of a Lancer in the hands of a clever captain: Lancers are hard to spot and hard to outrun.

ANVIL-CLASS FACTORY SHIP

This is the sprawling, ugly factory ship the average citizen pictures when huge dwarven spaceships are mentioned. The Anvil-class is hardly a starship in appearance. From the outside, it appears as a knot of

machinery in space. Exhaust gases and fluids pour into space seemingly at random. Engines jut out from between lengths of iron pipe. Everything tapers subtlely towards the top of the ship; to the detail-oriented dwarven eye, this gives the Anvil a mountain-like appearance.

Inside, dwarven factory ships don't feel much like starships. Portholes are scarce as most of the habitat is deep inside the vessel. Hard space is used to cool some of the enormous equipment these ships lug around. Some factory ships are dedicated to a single, complicated product, while others manufacture assortments of items. Dwarven workers and their families live for years on these ships, sometimes going months in deep space without a *teleport* or any contact with the outside world.

Anvil-class ships are notoriously difficult to get around in, except for dwarves. It seems like everything is too hot to touch, covered in grease, or ready to grind up a finger. Corridors abruptly end or change dimensions to accomodate new or expanded equipment. Everything is functional, everything works.

Factory ships are incredibly self-sufficient, storing years' worth of food and fuel. Emissions can be carefully regulated to provide a good degree of stealth. In the event of attack (it's very rare), Anvils have little to rely on except their endurance. All tonnage is internal, though the volume is actually quite low. When the holds fill up, it's time for the ship to stop off and begin selling its products. Factory ships need multiple *starcasters* and astronavs installed in order to get around; one round-trip journey by *teleport* just about exhausts a *starcaster*.

Dwarven Factory Ship: Colossal V Vehicle; hp 800; Top Spd 6; Acc 1; Dec 1; Hand –10; Sensors +7; Stealth 15; AC 20 (–128 size, –5 Dex, +143 natural); SQ vehicle, hardness 80; Fuel 1,000,000/20.

Stations: Pilot 1, Sensor 4, Crew 990, Passengers 1,000.

Cargo: 16,000 tons (hold).

Cost: 81,701,380 cr.

Known Uses

At least two factory ships are traveling around in the Run. Sometimes their captains contact freighters to retrieve supplies or ferry passengers to Persilom or Monscrome for short business trips. On occassion, visitors need to be brought to and from the factory. The medical facilities on factory ships can become overwhelmed in a hurry if a serious accident takes place on board.

Starship Operations

Basic starship operations require routine maintenance and monitoring to prevent ship systems from breaking down. The enormous ships that *teleport* cargo across the galaxy are at once extremely complex, highly generalized, and extraordinarily durable. Starships are built with redundant systems to prevent catastrophic failures and use standardized parts whenever possible. A surprising number of common starship components use interchangeable parts. This keeps crews from having to keep large quantities of specialized, single-purpose parts on board.

Guidelines for starship maintenance and repair follow in this next section. These rules deal with repairs abstractly to keep the focus of the game on the choices of the characters in charge of the ship. These rules explain how to deal with ship-wide maintenance issues and generalized repairs to a starship. DMs should override these rules for those situations that call for more precise details or repairs to specific starship components. In those cases, refer to the Repair rules in the *Starfarer's Handbook* (pages 82 and 161–162).

The game mechanics and rules in this section are designated as **Open Game Content.** The descriptive text surrounding those rules is closed content.

Maintenance

As a starship's mileage increases, its parts begin to wear out or break. The more complex a starship is, the more elaborate the routine diagnostics, check-ups, and tunings it requires. Regular care keeps a starship working in top order, but most freighter crews can't afford the constant supplies or parts the factory recommends for proper maintenance. To keep costs down, a starship mechanic must carefully gauge the importance of maintaining a system against the cost of actually performing the maintenance.

Starships in perfect working order require maintenance at regular intervals to prevent the vehicle's performance from degrading. Maintenance is based on the existing starship characteristics you're already familiar with. How long a vessel has gone without being maintained is described by a maintenance DC that increases along with a vehicle's mileage. A successful Repair check resets the DC to zero, but at a cost in time and credits. If maintenance is neglected, systems suffer critical effects (*Starfarer's Handbook*, page 161) that grow progressively worse. If the routine repairs aren't sufficient for the wear and tear on the vehicle, break-downs occur.

DETERMINING THE MAINTENANCE DC

The maintenance DC is the difficulty of the Repair check needed to return an undamaged ship to regular working order. Every 100,000 miles of travel raises the DC one point. Because the *starcaster* is an arcane device and the light years that it crosses aren't actually moved through, *teleporting* does not count towards the maintenance DC. Especially difficult maneuvers, and most mishaps resulting from failed maneuvers, add one point to the maintenance DC, at the DM's discretion. The maintenance DC should rarely, if ever, go up more than one point at a time.

PERFORMING MAINTENANCE

Maintenance is performed with a Repair check and generally requires 20 or 30 minutes per point of the DC, depending on the size of the ship. Maintenance is an investigative process that requires the mechanic to examine devices all over the ship, but can usually be interrupted and returned to without any loss of progress. If the maintenance Repair check is successful, the maintenance is completed without difficulty. If the Repair check fails, the check total is used to determine how much time passes before problems arise.

Maintenance isn't something that happens during dramatic or dangerous situations, and so the mechanic in charge can normally take 10 on her Repair roll.

MAINTENANCE COSTS

Every time a Repair check is made to maintain ship's systems, tools break, spare parts get used, supplies of lubricant are exhausted, and other valuable resources are used up. This costs 1/100th the total value of the ship. For ground cars and small hovercraft, that's not so much money. For a multi-million dollar starship, the cost is usually somewhere in the tens of thousands, spread out over the period that the maintenance DC builds up.

Condition	Cost	DC
Light critical	X*	10
Moderate critical	X*	15
Heavy critical	X*	20
Severe critical	X*	25
Catastrophic critical	X*	30
Substitute parts	75%**	+5
Used parts	50%**	+10
No parts	25%**	+15

*Where *X* is 5% of the ship's cost
**Percentage of X

The expense of maintaining an elaborate starship means that small-time crews often have to put off making repairs and performing routine work. The more skilled the mechanic, the longer a ship can go on each maintenance expense. A ship that travels two million miles or more on routine upkeep begins to save money over the cost of repairs.

The maintenance cost is paid at the start of a new maintenance cycle, when the DC has just reset to zero. When the Repair check is finally made—no matter how much time has gone by—those supplies are finally exhausted and the process begins again.

BREAKDOWNS

If a starship's maintenance DC ever reaches 30, or if the Repair check to perform maintenance is ever failed, the vehicle's performance begins to suffer and systems break down. Performance drops are handled like critical hits in combat, except the damage originates within the ship's systems. No hit points are lost and hardness does not help. One random system is affected as if it had suffered a light critical hit. Fortunately for freighters, breakdowns in cargo systems only damage the cargo if it's in a controlled environment powered by the ship's systems, not an independent cargo pod.

For every two points the maintenance DC is raised beyond the value that caused the break down, things get worse. Roll again to determine which system degrades. Systems always fail one order of magnitude at a time, beginning with light damage.

If a vessel with no weapon systems rolls a weapons result on the critical hit location table (*Starfarer's Handbook*, page 161) then no breakdown occurs. Do not re-roll.

Once a ship begins to suffer system damage, maintenance cannot stop it. Successful Repair checks may reset the maintenance DC to zero but the critical damage will still need to be properly repaired.

Cost of Repairs

The *Starfarer's Handbook* gives the DM control over the cost and time involved in making repairs. This section offers some guidelines on which to base those costs.

Starships are as complex as mechanists are ingenious, however, so there is a way by which this cost can be cut. The cost of repairs assumes new, proper parts are available to be used in the repair job and that the damage to be repaired is enough to render the object almost useless. With used or substituted parts, however, a skilled mechanic can save quite a lot of money.

To determine the cost of critical repairs, follow these instructions. It's a good idea to perform these calculations before they're necessary, and keep the relevant values on hand for future use. First, divide the cost of the ship by 20. This is the cost to repair one critical with new replacement parts on hand. At 75% cost, related but similar parts can be substituted for the correct parts, but this adds 5 to the Repair DC. For 50% fewer credits, used parts can fill in for new parts, but this adds 10 to the DC. For just 25% of the cost, the mechanic can attempt to repair the damage with no replacement parts whatsoever, though this adds 15 to the Repair DC.

PARTS ON HAND

The cost of critical repairs has been generalized to make bookkeeping easy for players and their characters. Rather than be forced to limp back to a repair facility with failed systems and severe damage, a starship can carry replacement parts on board. These are recorded as a credit value that can be spent on repairs, according to DM approval, that the ship's engineer performs while the ship is in flight. Some repairs cannot be made while a ship is in motion or without a spacewalk. This value can be dipped into to cover maintenance costs, as well, and is generally a large portion of a ship's operating budget.

IN PRACTICE

For example: Bern is the engineer of a Longship freighter worth 4,000,000 credits that's just passed the two-million-mile mark (maintenance DC 20). Bern's held off on some important maintenance and decides now's the time. He rolls his Repair skill and gets just a 17. The ship develops a slight tremble that within a few hours is a terrible shaking. The ship's control systems are overworked and slowly beginning to fail. To fix this light critical, Bern needs 200,000 credits' worth of new impulse conduction cables. Fortunately, he's got some used ones in his engine room, so he uses those instead (100,000 credits out of the ship's 130,000-credit reserve of parts and equipment) and attempts the Repair check (normally DC 10) with a +10 modifier to the DC (20, now). He rolls his Repair skill this time and succeeds with a 22! The DM decides that this problem can be fixed while the ship is in flight and tells Bern's player that the job will take about 24 hours. If Bern had been able to make that DC 20 Repair check for routine maintenance, he would have spent just 40,000 credits' worth of spare parts.

Cargo Capacity and Usage

Buying Cargo Capacity

A ship cannot carry more tons of cargo than its frame was originally designed to accomodate unless the ship undergoes a major overhaul at a shipyard. Maximum cargo allowance must be purchased when a vehicle is first designed, at a rate of 1 credit per pound of cargo capacity. (There are 2,000 pounds in a ton.) Individual cargo containers and cargo hold refits aren't purchased when you're designing the ship, that usually happens during play or between adventures. Once the ship's maximum cargo capacity has been determined, that capacity must be divided between interior cargo holds and exterior cargo bays. This division of space is more-or-less final (see Cargo Hold Refits, below).

Cargo Holds

A cargo hold is the space within a starship specifically meant for hauling cargo. Dedicated cargo ships are often designed with multiple holds capable of lugging different types of goods, materials, and passengers across the deep empty.

Cargo Hold Refits

Cargo holds don't have the same level of flexibility as that granted by a cargo pod, but they are often more secure and never subject to the price-jacking that sometimes goes on in crooked starports. Cargo holds can be refit to offer most of the same specialized features as a cargo pod, such as an independent generator or environmental processors. It costs money every time a cargo hold gets remodeled, however, so it's usually not smart to go ahead with a refit unless the new features can be used on several runs in a row.

It costs .5 credits per pound of cargo capacity to be refit, plus the cost of the specialized features to be installed (as listed in Chapter Three). To return a cargo bay to its original, non-specialized condition, the original space must be repurchased at a rate of .25 credits per pound. To turn one sort of specialized cargo bay into another type of specialized cargo bay, the space must first be stripped and then rebuilt. This process can generally be done in one day for every 100 tons' worth of space.

Cargo Pods

A cargo pod or module is a self-contained structure usually latched to a vessel's outer hull at mounting brackets. A pod has its own hull, airlocks, and sometimes even power systems. Pods can be linked to one another to form large storage networks like a series of warehouse spaces. Sometimes these pods are the property of the customer, like the cargo inside. Sometimes, a starship captain owns his own assortment of containers stored at ports across the galaxy.

Although a starship may be capable of hauling an enormous mass of cargo, it does not always have occassion to. The largest benefit of the modular cargo containers used in space freight is the ability to sell off portions of a ship's cargo capacity for money. A ship that *teleports* with only half a hold's worth of cargo is losing money; selling off some of that empty space helps diffuse the loss.

Buying & Selling Cargo Pods

Once the total amount of space dedicated to cargo pods has been determined, that space may be broken down over virtually any number of cargo containers in any combination over the life of the ship. Cargo containers may be bought or sold for particular shipping runs. New containers are purchased at the price listed in Chapter Three and resold for 75% of the purchase price, minus damages. Used containers are bought for 75% of the purchase price and sold for 50% of the purchase price. After a pod has been through enough runs, it's broken down and recycled into new pods.

Damage to Cargo Pods

Cargo pods are more vulnerable to danger and damages than cargo bays. When a starship carrying a cargo pod takes damage, so does the cargo pod. Determine what percentage of the ship's hit points were lost to the nearest 10%, then reduce the resale value of the pod by half that percentage. When cargo pods are the recipients of critical hits, whole cargo pods go spinning off into space, losing both the cost of the pod and the cost of the cargo.

Cargo pods don't afford any protection to a starship or increase its hit points. Hit points are an abstraction that measures how far a vessel is from breaking down completely. The addition of cargo pods doesn't make a ship more able to withstand systems failure or torpedo hits. Because the pods are not part of a ship's operational systems, they might not even be affected if a ship loses all of its hit points and drifts off into the deep empty. Thus there are countless salvage opportunities floating about the vast reaches between the worlds.

Picking Up and Dropping Off

Cargo pods attach to a cargo ship's mounting brackets using male-female magnetic constrictors that automatically detect mated units within a certain proximity. To successfully pick up a cargo pod, the freighter must enter the square the pod is in and come to a stop. A Pilot check (DC 10) is required to line up the ship with the pod. This check is affected by speed and handling modifiers. Magnetic constrictors hold the pod's male connectors in a magnetic field that allow the pod to be turned until airlocks and hatches match up. The connections then seal and the pod cannot be repositioned unless it is disconnected and reacquired.

Dropping a pod off the ship is much easier, requiring a free Pilot check (DC 10). If this check is successful, the pod just drifts free of the vessel. If this check fails, the pod and the ship bump each other, causing the pilot to suffer a –5 to any other Pilot checks made that round.

For Sale

Large supply of used cargo pods for sale. Prices very reasonable, 50% of standard or best offer. Collection includes three 300-ton standard, linking pods with vehicle ramps. One damaged passenger module with bunks and toilets for six. Two habitational HEMs, used for planting, need cleaning. Antimagic module with moderate water damage. Independent pod with passenger harnesses, used once. All sales are absolutely final.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE SMUGGLER'S RUN

Introduction

The Smuggler's Run is a reach of space containing five star systems in a precarious balance of circumstances. The Empire has an interest in moving into the region and claiming its wealth, but not such an interest that the manpower has yet been diverted. The ancient and vast Gevise mercantile fleet moved into the area to capitalize on new business opportunities, but has found that not opening up the market may be more profitable for now. Free traders are working to forge lasting relationships in the region before the largest freight companies arrive and run them out of business. When Imperial law finally, formally comes to the Run, local customers in search of contraband will turn to their trusted, discreet business associates before they turn to the big companies. Or so every would-be smuggler hopes.

The whole region is like a house of stacked credit chips. Everyone wants the chips, but no one wants to bring it all crashing down.

Overview

There are five star systems in the Run, each one unique and supporting a different level of habitation.

Persilom is the portal to the region. It's the closest to civilized space and very much like an ordinary, modern world in the Empire. The trains run on time, the workers have jobs, and the people are safe. The planet has a lot of people with money to spend.

Monscrome is the functional outpost that makes it all possible. It's the hub for the whole region, a major refueling and repair facility, and an active economic center in its own right. No one comes to the Run to see Monscrome, but just about everyone ends up seeing it sooner or later.

Almer Station is the reason people came to the Run in the first place. Actually a collection of space stations and outposts scattered throughout the Tarnahan system, this is a network of legitimate businesses that covers for a variety of illegal outfits. Almer Station itself is tucked into the ring system of Tarnahan III.

Cediva is the draw for tourists and passengers and the

DISTANCES IN THE RUN

	Persilom	Monscrome	Almer Station	Cediva	Chadra
Persilom	—	8 LY	27 LY	12 LY	40 LY
Monscrome	8 LY	—	11 LY	22 LY	32 LY
Almer Station	27 LY	11 LY	—	30 LY	50 LY
Cediva	12 LY	22 LY	30 LY	—	12 LY
Chadra	40 LY	32 LY	50 LY	12 LY	—

hook on which House Gevise has hung its plans for the region. It's a primitive planet with a peaceful and elegant civilization that has no idea what's going on around it.

Chadra is the best-kept secret in the territory. It's a lush planet alone it its star system and it's teeming with natural resources to plunder. It also houses some arcane secrets that would bring agents of the Emperor to the region in an instant if word of them got out.

How to Use the Run

DMs can import the Smuggler's Run into your their campaign in whole or in part. You can begin a new campaign with the Run as your starting point, or you can play out a whole campaign that decides the fate of the region. Use as much or as little of the region as you like, then store, discard, or remodel the rest.

The individual planets in the Run have connections that can easily be stretched out over many more light years or severed completely. You could decide to place Persilom in the heart of Qesemet and steal Cediva for use in an adventure you have planned to take place in black dragon territory.

As a whole, the Smuggler's Run is presented as a reach of space with one foot in the Dragon Empire and one foot in the Outlands, but the distance between systems should be scaled to the power level of your game. The planets should be closer together for a low-level game to keep the Use Device DCs for *teleports* low. Remember that you can influence how quickly the region is explored by how far apart the planets are. High-level characters can hop confidently over light years that would block an inexperienced navigator.

You'll find the imminent expansion of the Dragon Empire into the rest of the region more ominous and exciting if you place the Run on the edge of Asamet space somewhere, but if the PCs in your campaign are mostly chaotic (or even evil), then the forthcoming arrival of representatives from Qesemet can be just as interesting.

An easy way to bring the Run into an existing campaign is to place one terminal of *Outlands Station* (*Guide to the Galaxy*, page 64) in the Persilom system. Players might come to this corner of the universe through the station's portals and end up crewing their own ship by some twist of fate. Easier still, they might just visit the region for an adventure or two, all the while getting flown around by a chartered ship with some strange cargo on board.

Players can tie their characters into the region by having them hail from Persilom or Monscrome or linking them to the slum stations around Almer. The first waves of new inhabitants that settled Persilom represent every major race in the Dragon Empire, while Monscrome is a crossroads where any would-be adventurer could go looking for transport to excitement.

Themed campaigns within the region include the obvious ship of free traders, scoundrels, and smugglers. The PCs could also start out as low-level hands in the Gevise merchant family's local ventures or as passengers bound for Cediva when disaster strikes. What if the players are the first representatives from Qesemet, sent to lay a foundation of tolerance and cooperation before Mezzenbone's conquerors arrive?

Persilom

This is the civilized pinnacle of the Run. Locals here don't consider themselves part of some backwater freighter circuit but rather citizens of the Dragon Empire. The planet was founded in the first year of Mezzenbone's reign and has artificially grown since then into a black, glass array of spindly skyrises. The primary industry on Persilom is programming and data anaylsis—everything else supports the information corporations based there. Young programmers and engineers were persuaded by the promise of lucrative jobs and a comfortable home. They got it.

The planet was a virtually featureless orb of soil when the Royal Exploratory Service found it. The Persilom metropolis was built out of prefabricated parts in less than a decade. Since then the planet has expanded quickly due to its very low cost of living. There's little to do on Persilom, but it's cheap.

House Gevise does quite well catering to the youg rich here. Luxury items such as fine foods, soaps, and apparel from the center of civilization are brought in 10 or 20 tons at a time for the trendy locals. The real big business, though, is the artificial fad House Gevise orchestrated. Persilomnites are currently obsessed with furniture, art, and crafts from nearby Cediva. Gevise merchants organize vacation packages to the planet and run elaborate spas there. Persilom imports much of its food from Cediva, too.

Routine shipments of foodstuffs and less essential goods come in from the Empire on private and giant commercial freighters. Persilom produces almost none of the essential goods necessary to keep a city of its size functioning.

The strange thing about Persilom is the nature of its Imperial presence. The Empire maintains simple offices on the planet and patrols the system for smugglers and pirates, but for a world that was meant to be the first step in a bold expansion of the Empire, nothing much has happened there for 30 years. Theories abound, but the

Persilom

Planet Name:	Persilom I
Planet Type:	Terrestrial
Size:	Medium
Gravity:	Standard
Atmospheric Density:	Thin
Atmospheric Composition:	Breathable
Geology:	Flat
Hydrosphere:	Wet
Biosphere:	Scarce
Population:	Moderate
Technology:	Imperial
Magic:	Moderate

PORT

AL:	LN
Skill level:	+10
Integrity:	20
Security:	CR 3
Taxes:	8%

MARKET

Export:	Information, electronics
Import:	Foodstuffs, luxury items, double unique (Cedivan crafts, furniture)
Volume:	60,000 tons

RECENT HEADLINES

IMPERIAL LANCER TO TAKE ON PASSENGERS FOR SCENIC TOUR OF THE PERSILOM SYSTEM.

PERSILOM-BASED SOFTWARE CORPORATION WINS RARE IMPERIAL SPELLBOOK DEVELOPMENT CONTRACT.

CHARTER SHIP BOUND FOR CEDIVA DISAPPEARS, PRESUMED VICTIMS OF PIRACY

FOOD PRICES SETTLE AFTER THREE GEVISAN SHIPS ADDED TO LOCAL MERCHANT FLEET

Monscrome

Planet Name:	Ipsis Minor
Planet Type:	Terrestrial
Size:	Small
Gravity:	Standard
Atmospheric Density:	Standard
Atmospheric Composition:	Breathable
Geology:	Very rugged
Hydrosphere:	Very Dry
Biosphere:	Scarce
Population:	Low
Technology:	Imperial
Magic:	Low

PORT

AL:	N
Skill level:	+8
Integrity:	15
Security:	CR 3
Taxes:	5%

MARKET

Export:	Double commercial supplies (starship parts)
Import:	Foodstuffs, entertainment
Volume:	100,000 tons

RECENT HEADLINES

TWO BODIES FOUND BURIED IN SCRAP BENEATH MONTSCROLL

ALMER STATION SINGER LINAH APPEARING ONE NIGHT ONLY

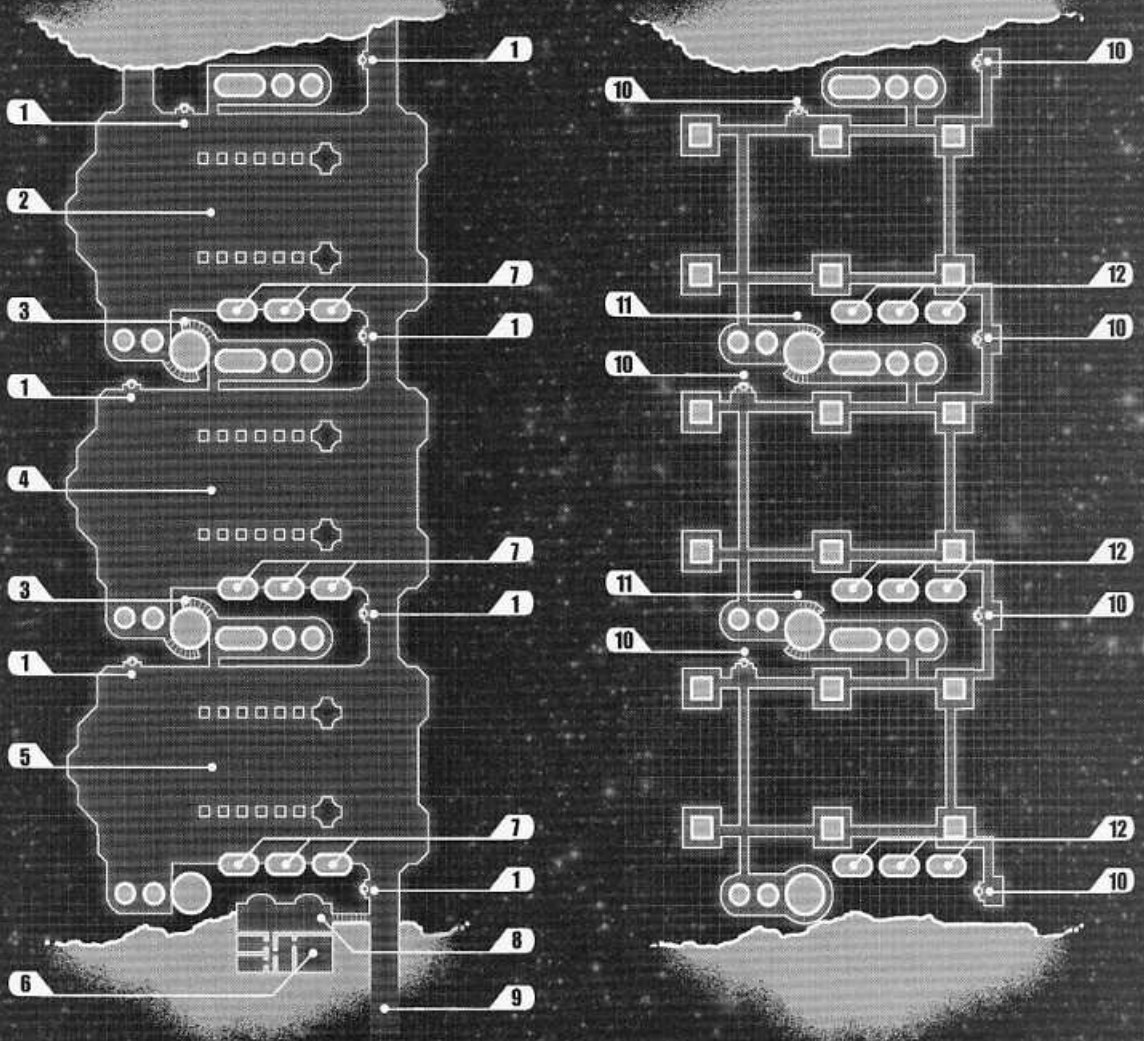
IMPERIAL INSPECTION TURNS UP CARGO POD LOADED WITH DEAD STOWAWAYS FROM CEDIVA

CIVILIAN STARSHIP DESTROYED IN IMPERIAL PURSUIT OF AREA SMUGGLING OUTFIT

UNUSED STARCASTER FOUND IN REMOTE MONSCROME JUNK PILE

MONTSCROLL STATION - LANDING PLATFORM

1 Square = 5 feet



LANDING PLATFORM FEATURES

1. Ladder Down to Catwalks
2. Platform A
3. Stairs Down to Catwalks
4. Platform B
5. Platform C
6. Office
7. Fuel Tanks
8. Observation Deck/ Traffic Control
9. Exit Tunnel

CATWALK FEATURES

10. Ladder Up to Landing Platforms
11. Stairs Up to Landing Platforms
12. Fuel Tanks

most popular hold that Mezzenbone intentionally wanted to create a city of programmers that was cut off from the bulk of society. For what purpose, no one is saying. It seems clear to those who keep an eye on the planet, though, that the Empire is maintaining a low profile there.

In person, Persilom is all shiny buildings, glassed-in courtyards, and stylish House Gevise public emporiums. There's money to be made there for the private trader, if she's willing to put up with long lines, strict behavior, overanxious security forces, and a lot of careful scrutiny via tiny sensors and cameras. Persilom is a city built on data and is thoroughly wired. Someone is always watching and, if you believe the stories they tell on Almer Station, that someone lives on Draconis.

Monscrome

Monscrome is a classic freighter captain's kind of town. The whole of the planet, like Persilom, exists to support a single settlement. Unlike Persilom, that settlement sprawls and winds through 5,000 miles of aimless canyons, steep ravines, and sheer cliffs.

Monscrome was founded years before Persilom as a backwater salvage yard and stopping point for travelers on the long *teleport* back to civilization. For a century corporations have been dropping damaged, ruined, or unpopular starship parts into the canyons of Monscrome. Now, Monscrome's primary settlement—Montscroll Station—is among the best-equipped refit stations in a 10 light year radius. Parts for just about every ship in the galaxy can be found on Monscrome if you dig deep enough, long enough.

The settlements on Monscrome house some 500,000 or so mechanists, rangers, pilots, repair men, dock workers, deadbeats, and others. From just about any vantage point, Montscroll looks like an enormous, mile-deep corridor of brown rock beneath a flawless blue sky. The winds are phenomenal, and Monscromers have a tendency to yell as a result.

The buildings of Montscroll cling to the rock face of the canyons, disappear into gorges and cracks, and come out again further down the stretch. Landing pads stretch across the gap from one cliff face to the other, lined with ships heavier than specifications should allow to dock. Beneath these hang precarious gangways and access ladders. Jutting from the rocky surface above the canyon are squat control towers. Hotels poke through the rock face so pilots can look out at their ships. Below it all, like an unmoving, jagged river of steel, is the swollen collection of scrap and starship parts that keeps Monscrome in business. When local mechanics work on ships, they just toss old parts over their shoulders and off the station.

Almer Station

Planet Name:	Tarnahan V
Planet Type:	Gas Giant
Size:	Very large
Gravity:	Extreme
Atmospheric Density:	Very dense
Atmospheric Composition:	Hostile
Geology:	Flat
Hydrosphere:	Very dry
Biosphere:	Very scarce
Population:	Very low
Technology:	Imperial
Magic:	Low

PORT

AL:	CN
Skill level:	+10
Integrity:	10
Security:	CR 6
Taxes:	3%

MARKET

Export:	Military supplies (illegal), commercial supplies, entertainment
Import:	Foodstuffs, electronics, heavy equipment
Volume:	20,000 tons

RUMORS

"I hear it that Janni girl's got blood with the fellas who own Almer. I hear she's set for life, travels the stars just for fun."

"You think the rings have a bit of mithral? Nah, man, they're full to bursting. They say that to keep the dragons away."

"That liquid mithral talk is just static. I hear liquid mithral throws *'casters* off. Can't *'port* straight with liquid mithral."

"That Janni once lit a guy up with a laser right here in this bar. Cause he said something about her being a make-believe captain. Saw it myself. True story."

Monscrome has little to no social scene. Entertainment is desperately lacking. Rundown, closed-up venues sit gutted at the bottom of the local hotels. Virtually every shop on the planet offers holographic plays, books, and recorded music for sale. When very large ships come in, the crews fill up the small bars on the planet to talk shop with the small-time operators passing through. When the ships are in, Monscrome is a good place to get news from across the Empire with a minimum of bias or hyperbole. Otherwise, it's a good place to lay low.

Almer Station

Almer Station was meant as a good place to lay low, but the place can hardly calm down long enough to serve as a good rest stop. Almer Station is a hyperactive den of punks, trash, bullies, smugglers, ruffians, and illegal modification bays for starships and spellware. Ship captains in search of starship weapons, hired muscle, and brutal bar-fights go to Almer Station.

Almer is hidden in the ring system of the gas giant in the Tarnahan system. The station is technically a handful of small stations scattered throughout the ice and debris of the rings. Some stations house repair bays, some house bars and tattoo parlors, one houses the station's famous casino. The true number of stations that make up Almer isn't common knowledge. The whole place is awash in secrets, speculation, and whispered rumors. Almer's position within the ring system is even a secret; to find the station, ships circle around until they're contacted with a transmission. The ring debris also favors small, nimble ships over large ones, which keeps any Imperial ships from being able to close on the station without a lot of warning. Shuttles get dispatched to ferry crews of ships too large to navigate in the rings. (Pilot check DC 15 to avoid a collision with a Gargantuan block of ice.)

Somewhere in the ring system is a mithral mine. It's not an enormous lode, but the folks who run Almer protect it with great care. Who exactly runs Almer, however, is something of a mystery. The station's security force is made up of rotating mercenaries, and the management plainly admits that they don't call the shots.

Periodically, cargoes of liquid mithral appear at Almer Station for sale to private captains and smugglers. The origin of the stuff is secret, but rumor is rampant that the rings are richer in mithral than the official line would say. Somewhere in the rings of Tarnahan there must an alchemical factory producing liquid mithral.

Janni Armah

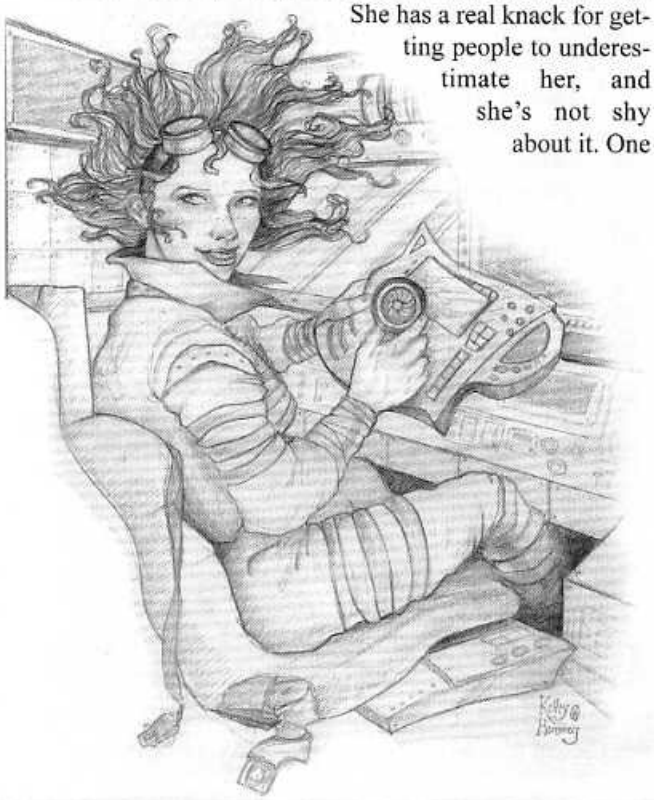
The youthful human freighter captain Janni Armah is one of the pleasant faces of Almer Station, which

Janni Armah: Female human Pil6/Rog6; CR 12; Mediu humanoid; HD 12d6; hp 45; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +8; Grap +7;Atk +11 ranged (2d10, laser pistol); Full Atk +11/+6 ranged (2d10, laser pistol); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +13, Will +8; Str 9, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +8, Bluff +16, Diplomacy +11, Freefall +11, Gather Information +11, Intimidate +10, Listen +5, Navigate +9, Pilot +16, Profession (trader) +10, Repair +8, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +11, Use Device +7; Alertness, Born Spacer, Ettiquette, Innocent Demeanor, Iron Will, Quick Draw, Space Jockey, Starship Piloting, Technical Proficiency.

Possessions: Laser pistol, datapad, personal communicator, modified *Longship*-class freighter (*Silverquick*).

almost certainly means she's covering for something. She has a real knack for getting people to underestimate her, and she's not shy about it. One minute she admits that she's a consummate liar and the next she swears she's cutting you a great deal on liquid mithral.



Janni isn't honest, but she's mostly fair. She enjoys the flirtations and the games that go with her job. She loves keeping secrets, like where Almer's liquid mithral is coming from and who the mysterious benefactor behind the station is. At the same time, she's very respectful of other people's secrets. She likes to make guesses, but doesn't trust anyone who can't keep their mouth shut about what matters.

Most of Janni's business is in the Run, but she sometimes heads into the Empire or out into the more remote territories of the Outlands. She's been to Chadra on a haul or two but doesn't have much to say about the place, which almost certainly means she knows something. It's not unusual to find her on Persilom, but her favorite spot is the casino at Almer Station

Janni's crew for the *Silverquick* is a mix of working-class businesspeople and greasy, dangerous hustlers from Almer. On Persilom she has a reputation for caus-

Cediva

Planet Name:	Coro III
Planet Type:	Terrestrial
Size:	Medium
Gravity:	Standard
Atmospheric Density:	Standard
Atmospheric Composition:	Breathable
Geology:	Standard
Hydrosphere:	Wet
Biosphere:	Abundant
Population:	Moderate
Technology:	Pre-industrial
Magic:	High

PORT

AL:	N
Skill level:	+5
Integrity:	18
Security:	CR 3
Taxes:	8%

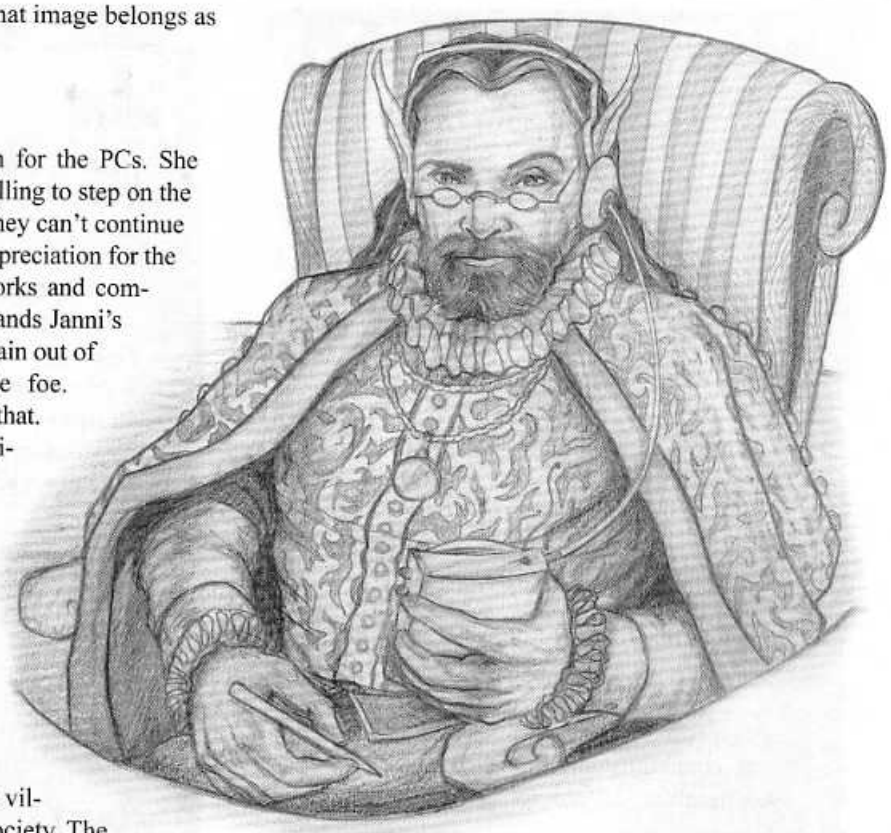
MARKET

Export:	Crafts, double unique (Cedivan furniture)
Import:	Electronics
Volume:	20,000 tons

ing trouble and public crudeness. That image belongs as much to her crew as it does to her.

IN YOUR GAME

Janni makes a great rival captain for the PCs. She wants to succeed in life and she's willing to step on the PCs to do it, but that doesn't mean they can't continue to socialize. She expects the same appreciation for the needs of the job from those she works and competes with. Anyone who misunderstands Janni's love of competition and makes a villain out of her will have made a formidable foe. Anyone around Almer will swear to that. She's sometimes tricky to be in business with, they say, but that's much preferable to having her as an enemy.



Cediva

The tranquil, baroque world of Cediva is a child by Imperial standards. Its simple people live idyllic lives in rural villages and handsome villas. Art is at the center of Cedivan society. The arts and crafts of Cediva are fashionable commodities in many posh noble circles of the Dragon Empire. The people of Cediva, however, have no idea that other planets even exist.

House Gevise made first contact with Cediva intending to spearhead the process of mass producing Cedivan art. The Gevises planned to do on Cediva what they had done on countless other pre-industrialized worlds: make money. But the viceroy of Cediva, Calisan, a third-tier politician in a civiliztion with little politicking, had another idea. He would orchestrate the exportation of Cedivan art and antiquities as precious, unique works of art. In exchange, the Gevises would keep the existence of the modern world a secret...and make him a very rich man.

Orbital spas were put into place around Cediva by Gevise engineers, and quaint little cabins with secret, modern ammenities have been installed on the planet's surface. Wealthy tourists from Persilom pay Gevise transports to take them to Cediva, where they recline in the comfortable, rolling hillsides of the world, drink local wine, and relax. In the valleys below, unknowing Cedivan farmers grow food that gets carried away on magical spacecraft to feed Persilom.

The Gevises know the deal with Calisan can't last. When the ships arrive from Asamet, Cediva will be forcibly modernized and then stripped of its wealth. In the meantime, the merchant family is doing everything it can to keep life simple and serene on Cediva. They've only begun to suspect that Calisan may be a more immediate threat than Asamet.

Calisan: Male half-elf Ari5/Rog5; CR 9; Medium humanoid; HD 5d4 + 5d6; hp 26; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +6; Grap +5; Atk/Full Atk +8 ranged (3d8, blaster pistol); SQ +2 saves vs. enchantment, detect secret doors, immune to magic sleep effects, low-light vision; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +10, Bluff +18, Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +14, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (law) +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Search +10, Sense Motive +14, Sleight of Hand +9, Spot +4; Negotiator, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Bluff), Superior Attitude.

Possessions: Blaster pistol, datapad, personal communicator.

Calisan

Calisan adores electronics. He secretly possesses several modern devices and carries them everywhere with him. He delights in the secret he holds over the primitive rulers of Cediva. Unfortunately, Calisan has not kept his secret from the rest of the Run.

In the last few months, Calisan has been quietly accessing Gevisan transmitters and contacting local starship captains. He's told his story over and again so that now the true story of Cediva is known to every merchant captain within 10 light years, either first- or second-hand. Some of them have agreed to work with Calisan because they like the idea of sneaking around under the nose of House Gevise. Other captains just like the money Calisan's magical trinkets can fetch on the markets of Imperial worlds.

Calisan is planning on going over House Gevise and straight to the Empire. He wants to rule Cediva, and he's figured out that the way to do that is to start dealing with Asamet directly. Calisan has ship captains collecting goods for him. Mercenaries from the modern worlds are en route to Cediva to serve as Calisan's personal soldiers. Kidnapped Cedivan citizens have been smuggled offworld to serve as cheap labor and to demonstrate Calisan's genuine intentions.

Now all Calisan needs is a ship to take him to the Dragon Empire.

IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Calisan is a villain that wants to work with the PCs. He offers ridiculous sums of money in gold and jewels to captains who will run his errands for him. Is it only a matter of time before the dragons tear Cediva apart anyway, or would the PCs be ruining a world? If Calisan gets the Empire's attention, won't that be the end of the freedom afforded in this part of galaxy?

Chadra

The great untapped resource of the Smuggler's Run is Chadra, a large green planet bursting with life. Jungles stretch across the whole of the planet, with only a few breaks for wide wetlands and grassy fields. The planet's southern hemisphere is covered in immense waterways, hidden beneath a dense layer of jungle canopy. Underneath it all are serpentine ruins, huge statues, and subterranean fields of jutting yellow dragon bones. Whatever once dwelt on Chadra has left a lot of dead dragons in its wake.

Adventurers, poachers, and gatherers visit Chadra on small chartered spacecraft to explore the ruins and haul back the loot they find. House Gevise sends regular ships to the planet to collect exotic food and game. Otherwise, Chadra is a market waiting to be opened.

Chadra

Planet Name:	Chadra
Planet Type:	Terrestrial
Size:	Medium
Gravity:	Standard
Atmospheric Density:	Dense
Atmospheric Composition:	Breathable
Geology:	Rugged
Hydrosphere:	Wet
Biosphere:	Abundant
Population:	Very low
Technology:	Primitive
Magic:	High

MARKET

Export: Foodstuffs, magical supplies (see text)

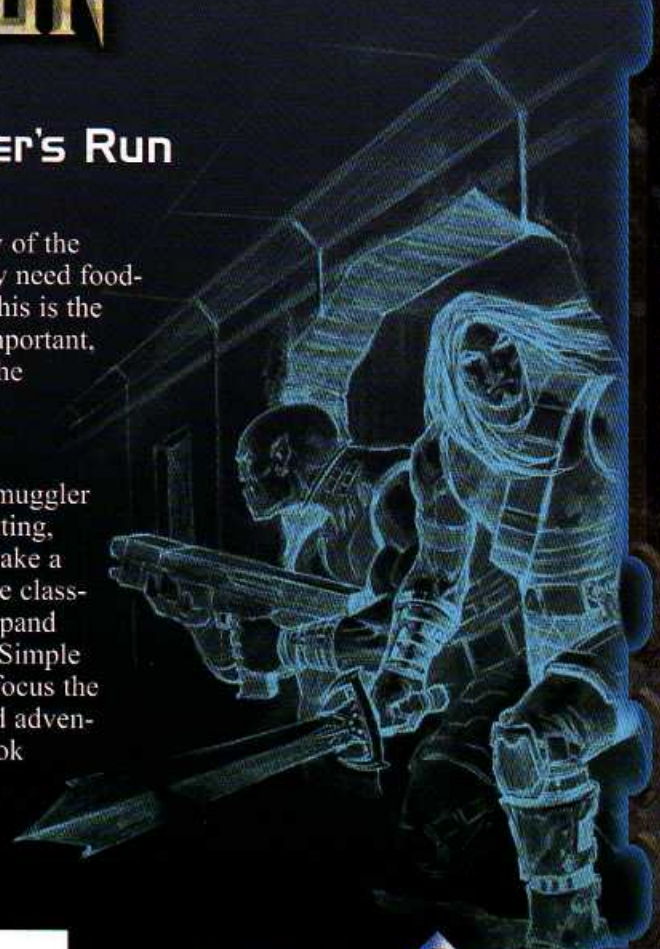
Currently, would-be looters face the difficult task of selling off the magical artifacts from a civilization of celebrated dragonslayers. When the dragons find Chadra, they'll almost certainly have the gold, silver, and platinum treasure melted down. The vast collections of potent magical artifacts will no doubt become the property of Mezzenbone himself. The entire record of Chadra's civilization is likely to be lost.

To the mind of the Gevises who dabble in the antiquities trade, this is wonderful. A nice trickle of Chadran artifacts now will be worth millions when the rest of the collection is destroyed. As it is, though, too many people may know about Chadra. It's only a matter of time before word gets back to the Dragon Court. When that happens, Chadra will be hit by a wave of looters and grave-robbers only too happy to strip mine the planet before the dragons do.

Until that happens, though, Chadra is full of objects both natural and hand made that could be the start of a new trend on Persilom or sweep across the Empire's rich elite. New plants, exotic animals, and priceless treasures by the hundred are waiting to be taken out and introduced to the world.

SMUGGLER'S RUN™

Welcome to the Smuggler's Run



At the edge of civilized space or in the shadow of the Dragon Empire itself, the citizens of the galaxy need foodstuffs, technology, clothing, and contraband. This is the role of the interstellar free trader, delivering important, secret, or illegal cargo to the richest spires of the Empire and the deepest pits of the Outlands.

This book has everything you need to play a smuggler or free trader in the DRAGONSTAR campaign setting, plus the tools players and DMs both need to make a privateers campaign fun and easy. New prestige classes, new feats, new spells, and new starships expand and define the markets of the Dragon Empire. Simple new rules for commerce, supply, and demand focus the smuggler's business on its exciting choices and adventure possibilities. To demonstrate it all, this book describes a new, remote corner of the DRAGONSTAR universe that's easy to place into any campaign: the Smuggler's Run.

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